This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

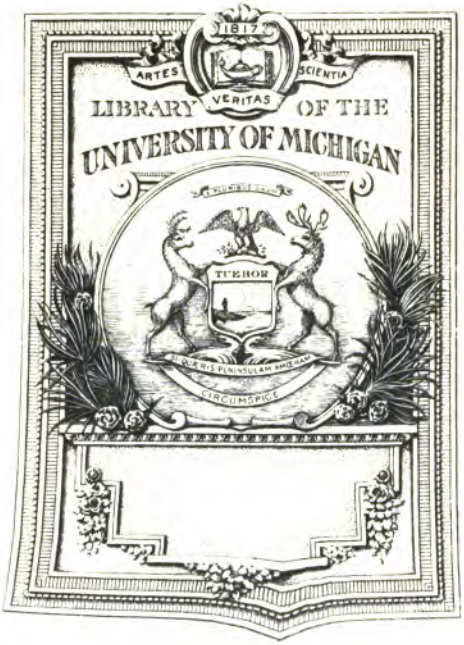
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

A 513441


1817
ARTES
VERITAS
SCIENTIA
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
TUEBOR
CIRCUMSPICE

95-96

T-9LC
1997

H. Richter del. et sc.

MILTON. POPE.

Dr. JOHNSON.

DRYDEN. THOMSON.

NIV.

Published Jan.y 1. 1797. by E. Newbery, corner of St. Paul's

28614

JOHNSON's LIVES OF THE ENGLISH POETS,

ABRIDGED:

WITH

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

BY THE EDITOR.

DESIGNED FOR

THE IMPROVEMENT OF YOUTH

IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF

POLITE LITERATURE,

AND AS

A USEFUL AND PLEASING COMPENDIUM FOR PERSONS OF RIPER YEARS.

To which is prefixed,

SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE OF Dr. JOHNSON.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR E. NEWBERY, AT THE CORNER OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1797.

PREFACE.

A WORK better calculated to lead the young mind to an acquaintance with Engliſh Literature, than Dr. Johnſon's Lives of the Poets, is, perhaps, not in exiſtence. It has been univerſally read and admired, for ſtrength and dignity of ſtyle, originality of ſentiment, and perſpicuity of remark. It is not eaſy, indeed, to ſay, whether we more admire the author for the entertainment and inſtruction he affords us, or revere him for his invariable attachment to the cauſe of religion and virtue. That this great man did not in any inſtance write under the influence of partiality or prejudice, is not meant to be aſſerted, becauſe it is not to be believed. Yet, notwithſtanding ſome defects of this kind, his work is a maſterpiece of criticiſm and biography.

That young perſons, or others, to whom the price of the original work may be an inconvenience, may yet have acceſs to the information

it contains, the preſent abridgement has been made. On examination, we truſt it will be found to comprize, in a condenſed form, all that is moſt worthy of attention: the parts neceſſarily omitted are thoſe which it was thought could beſt be ſpared, and would be leaſt regretted.

Every Poet recorded by Dr. Johnſon is here included: and of the Editor's Annotations, ſome are calculated to confirm conjectures or elucidate facts, and others to introduce anecdotes unnoticed by the Doctor, and with which, probably, he was not acquainted.

In fine, the volume now offered to the Public will be found at leaſt a faithful abſtract of its great original; the information it communicates, though compendious, is yet ſatisfactory; and in it have been blended, with attentive care, the agreeable and the uſeful.

SOME

SOME ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE

OF

DR. JOHNSON.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, who has been ſtyled the brighteſt ornament of the 18th century, was born in the city of Litchfield in Staffordſhire, on the 18th of September N. S. 1709. His father Michael was a bookſeller, and muſt have had ſome reputation in the city, as he more than once bore the office of chief magiſtrate.

When arrived at a proper age for grammatical inſtruction, he was placed in the free ſchool of Litchfield, of which one Mr. Hunter was then maſter; a man whom his illuſtrious pupil thought "very ſevere, and *wrong-headedly* ſevere," becauſe he would beat a boy for not anſwering queſtions which he could not expect to be aſked. He was, however, a ſkilful teacher; and Johnſon, when he ſtood in the very front of learning, was ſenſible how much he owed to him; for upon being aſked how he had acquired ſo accurate a knowledge of the Latin tongue, he replied, "My maſter beat me very well; without that, Sir, I ſhould have done nothing."

At the age of 15 Johnſon was removed from Litchfield to the ſchool of Stourbridge in Worceſterſhire, at which he remained little more than a year, and then returned home, where he ſtaid two years without any ſettled plan of life or any regular courſe of ſtudy. He read, however, a great deal in a deſultory manner, as chance threw books in his way, and as inclination directed him through them; ſo that when in his 19th year he was entered a commoner of Pembroke college, Oxford, his mind was ſtored with a variety of ſuch knowledge as is not often acquired in univerſities, where boys ſeldom read any books but what are put into their hands by their tutors. He had given very early proofs of his poetical genius both in his ſchool exerciſes and in other occaſional compoſitions: but what is perhaps more remarkable, as it ſhows that he muſt have thought much on a ſubject on which other boys of that age ſeldom think at all, he had before he was 14 entertained doubts of the truth of revelation. From the melancholy caſt of his temper theſe would naturally prey upon his ſpirits, and give him great uneaſineſs: but they were happily removed by a proper courſe of reading: for "his ſtudies, being honeſt, ended in conviction. He found that religion is true; and what he had learned, he ever afterward endeavoured to teach."

For ſome tranſgreſſion or abſence his tutor had impoſed upon him as a Chriſtmas exerciſe the taſk of tranſlating into Latin verſe Pope's *Meſſiah*; which being ſhown to the author of the original, was read and returned with this encomium, "The writer of this poem will leave it a queſtion for poſterity, whether his or mine be the original." The particular courſe of his reading while in college, and during the vacation which he paſſed at home, cannot be traced. That at this period he read much, we have his own evidence in what he afterwards told the king; but his mode of

ſtudy

ſtudy was never regular, and at all times he thought more than he read. He informed Mr. Boſwell, that what he read *ſolidly* at Oxford was Greek, and that the ſtudy of which he was moſt fond was metaphyſics.

It was in the year 1731 that Johnſon left the univerſity without a degree; and as his father, who died in the month of December of that year, had ſuffered great misfortunes in trade, he was driven out a commoner of nature, and excluded from the regular modes of profit and proſperity. Having therefore not only a profeſſion, but the means of ſubſiſtence to ſeek, he accepted, in the month of March 1732, an invitation to the office of under-maſter of a free ſchool at Market Boſworth in Leiceſterſhire: but not knowing, as he ſaid, whether it was more diſagreeable for him to teach or for the boys to learn the grammar-rules, and being likewiſe diſguſted at the treatment which he received from the patron of the ſchool, he relinquiſhed in a few months a ſituation which he ever afterwards recollected with horror. Being thus again without any fixed employment, and with very little money in his pocket, he tranſlated Lobo's voyage to Abyſſinia, for the trifling ſum, it is ſaid, of five guineas, which he received from a bookſeller in Birmingham. This was the firſt attempt which it is certain he made to procure pecuniary aſſiſtance by means of his pen; and it muſt have held forth very little encouragement to his commencing author by profeſſion.

In 1735, being then in his 26th year, he married Mrs. Porter, the widow of a mercer in Birmingham; whoſe age was almoſt double his; whoſe external form, according to Garrick and others, had never been captivating; and whoſe fortune amounted to hardly 800l. That ſhe had a ſuperiority of underſtanding and talents is extremely probable, both becauſe ſhe certainly inſpired him with a more than ordinary paſſion, and becauſe ſhe was herſelf ſo delighted with the charms of

his converſation as to overlook his external diſadvantages, which were many and great. He now ſet up a private academy; for which purpoſe he hired a large houſe well ſituated near his native city: but his name having then nothing of that celebrity which afterwards commanded the attention and reſpect of mankind, this undertaking did not ſucceed. The only pupils who are known to have been placed under his care, were the celebrated David Garrick, his brother George Garrick, and a young gentleman of fortune whoſe name was Offely. He kept his academy only a year and a half; and it was during that time that he conſtructed the plan and wrote a great part of his tragedy of Irene.

The reſpectable character of his parents and his own merit had ſecured him a kind reception in the beſt families at Litchfield; and he was particularly diſtinguiſhed by Mr. Walmſley, regiſter of the eccleſiaſtical court, a man of great worth and of very extenſive and various erudition. That gentleman, upon hearing part of Irene read, thought ſo highly of Johnſon's abilities as a dramatic writer, that he adviſed him by all means to finiſh the tragedy and produce it on the ſtage. To men of genius the ſtage holds forth temptations almoſt reſiſtleſs. The profits ariſing from a tragedy, including the repreſentation and printing of it, and the connections which it ſometimes enables the author to form, were in Johnſon's imagination ineſtimable. Flattered, it may be ſuppoſed, with theſe hopes, he ſet out ſome time in the year 1737, with his pupil David Garrick, for London, leaving Mrs. Johnſon to take care of the houſe and the wreck of her fortune. The two adventurers carried with them from Mr. Walmſley an earneſt recommendation to the reverend Mr. Colſon, then maſter of an academy, and afterwards Lucaſian profeſſor of mathematics in the univerſity of Cambridge; but from that gentleman it does not appear that Johnſon found either protection or encouragement.

How

How he ſpent his time upon his firſt going to London is not particularly known. His tragedy was refuſed by the managers of that day; and for ſome years the Gentleman's Magazine ſeems to have been his principal reſource for employment and ſupport. To enumerate his various communications to that far-famed miſcellany, would extend this article beyond the limits which we can afford. Suffice it to ſay, that his connection with Cave the proprietor, became very cloſe; that he wrote prefaces, eſſays, reviews of books, and poems; and that he was occaſionally employed in correcting the papers written by other correſpondents. When the complaints of the nation againſt the adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole became loud, and a motion was made, February 13th 1740-1, to remove him from his majeſty's counſels for ever, Johnſon was pitched upon by Cave to write what was in the Magazine intitled *Debates in the Senate of Lilliput*, but was underſtood to be the ſpeeches of the moſt eminent members in both houſes of parliament. Theſe orations, which induced *Voltaire* to compare Britiſh with ancient eloquence, were haſtily ſketched by Johnſon while he was not yet 32 years old, while he was little acquainted with life, while he was ſtruggling not for diſtinction but for exiſtence. Perhaps in none of his writings has he given a more conſpicuous proof of a mind prompt and vigorous almoſt beyond conception: for they were compoſed from ſcanty notes taken by illiterate perſons employed to attend in both houſes; and ſometimes he had nothing communicated to him but the names of the ſeveral ſpeakers, and the part which they took in the debate.

His ſeparate publications, which at this time attracted the greateſt notice, were, "*London*, a Poem in imitation of Juvenal's third Satire;" "*Marmor Norfolcienſe*, or an Eſſay on an ancient prophetical Inſcription in Monkiſh Rhyme, lately diſcovered near

Lynne in Norfolk;" and "A complete Vindication of the Licenſers of the Stage from the malicious and ſcandalous aſperſions of Mr. Brook, author of Guſtavus Vaſa." The poem, which was publiſhed 1738 by Dodſley, is univerſally known and admired as the moſt ſpirited inſtance in the Engliſh language of ancient ſentiments adapted to modern topics. Pope, who then filled the poetical throne without a rival, being informed that the author's name was *Johnſon*, and that he was an obſcure perſon, replied, "he will ſoon be *déterré*." The other two pamphlets, which were publiſhed in 1739, are filled with keen ſatire on the government: and though Sir John Hawkins has thought fit to declare that they diſplay neither learning nor wit, Pope was of a different opinion: for, in a note of his preſerved by Mr. Boſwell, he ſays, that "the whole of the Norfolk Prophecy is very humorous."

Mrs. Johnſon, who went to London ſoon after her huſband, now lived ſometimes in one place and ſometimes in another, ſometimes in the city and ſometimes at Greenwich: but Johnſon himſelf was oftener to be found at St. John's Gate, where the Gentleman's Magazine was publiſhed, than in his own lodgings. It was there that he became acquainted with *Savage*, with whom he was induced, probably by the ſimilarity of their circumſtances, to contract a very cloſe friendſhip; and ſuch was their extreme neceſſities, that they have often wandered whole nights in the ſtreet for want of money to procure them a lodging. In one of theſe nocturnal rambles, when their diſtreſs was almoſt incredible, ſo far were they from being depreſſed by their ſituation, that in high ſpirits, and brimful of patriotiſm, they traverſed St. James's Square for ſeveral hours, inveighed againſt the miniſter, and, as Johnſon ſaid in ridicule of himſelf, his companion, and of all ſuch patriots, "reſolved that *they* would ſtand by their country!" In 1744, he publiſhed the

life

life of his unfortunate companion; a work which, had he never written any thing elſe, would have placed him very high in the rank of authors. His narrative is remarkably ſmooth and well diſpoſed, his obſervations are juſt, and his reflections diſcloſe the inmoſt receſſes of the human heart.

In 1749, when Drury-lane theatre was opened under the management of Garrick, Johnſon wrote a prologue for the occaſion, which for juſt dramatic criticiſm on the whole range of the Engliſh ſtage, as well as for poetical excellence, is confeſſedly unrivalled. But this year is, in his life, diſtinguiſhed as the epoch when his arduous and important work, the Dictionary of the Engliſh Language, was announced to the world by the publication of its plan or proſpectus, addreſſed to the Earl of Cheſterfield. From that nobleman Johnſon was certainly led to expect patronage and encouragement; and it ſeems to be equally certain that his lordſhip expected, when the book ſhould be publiſhed, to be honoured with the dedication. The expectations of both were diſappointed. Lord Cheſterfield, after ſeeing the lexicographer once or twice, ſuffered him to be repulſed from his door: but afterwards, thinking to conciliate him when the work was upon the eve of publication, he wrote two papers in "The World," warmly recommending it to the public. This artifice was ſeen through; and Johnſon, in very polite language, rejected his lordſhip's advances, letting him know, that he was unwilling the public ſhould conſider him as owing to a patron that which Providence had enabled him to do for himſelf. This great and laborious work its author expected to complete in three years: but he was certainly employed upon it ſeven; for we know that it was begun in 1747, and the laſt ſheet was ſent to the preſs in the end of the year 1754. When we conſider the nature of the undertaking, it is indeed aſtoniſhing that it was

finiſhed ſo ſoon, ſince it was written, as he ſays, "with little aſſiſtance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great; not in the ſoft obſcurities of retirement, or under the ſhelter of academic bowers, but amidſt inconvenience and diſtraction, in ſickneſs and in ſorrow." The ſorrow to which he here alludes is probably that which he felt for the loſs of his wife, who died on the 17th of March O. S. 1752, and whom he continued to lament as long as he lived.

The Dictionary did not occupy his whole time; for while he was puſhing it forward, he fitted his Tragedy for the ſtage; wrote the lives of ſeveral eminent men for the Gentleman's Magazine; publiſhed an Imitation of the 10th Satire of Juvenal, intitled "The Vanity of Human Wiſhes;" and began and finiſhed "The Rambler." This laſt work is ſo well known, that it is hardly neceſſary to ſay that it was a periodical paper, publiſhed twice a-week, from the 20th of March 1750 to the 14th of March 1752 incluſive; but to give our readers ſome notion of the vigour and promptitude of the author's mind, it may not be improper to obſerve, that notwithſtanding the ſeverity of his other labours, all the aſſiſtance which he received does not amount to five papers; and that many of the moſt maſterly of thoſe unequalled eſſays were written on the ſpur of the occaſion, and never ſeen entire by the author till they returned to him from the preſs.

Soon after the Rambler was concluded, Dr. Hawkeſworth projected "The Adventurer" upon a ſimilar plan; and by the aſſiſtance of friends he was enabled to carry it on with almoſt equal merit. For a ſhort time, indeed, it was the moſt popular work of the two; and the papers with the ſignature T, which are confeſſedly the moſt ſplendid in the whole collection, are now known to have been communicated by Johnſon, who received for each the ſum of two guineas. This

was

was double the price for which he ſold ſermons to ſuch clergymen as either would not or could not compoſe their own diſcourſes; and of ſermon-writing he ſeems to have made a kind of trade.

Though he had exhauſted, during the time that he was employed on the Dictionary, more than the ſum for which the bookſellers had bargained for the copy; yet by means of the Rambler, Adventurer, ſermons, and other productions of his pen, he now found himſelf in greater affluence than he had ever done before; and as the powers of his mind, diſtended by long and ſevere exerciſe, required relaxation to reſtore them to their proper tone, he appears to have done little or nothing from the cloſing of the Adventurer till the year 1756, when he ſubmitted to the office of reviewer in the Literary Magazine. Of his reviews, by far the moſt valuable is that of Soame Jennyns's "Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil." Never were wit and metaphyſical acuteneſs more cloſely united than in that criticiſm, which expoſes the weakneſs and holds up to contempt the reaſoning of thoſe vain mortals, who preſumptuouſly attempt to graſp the ſcale of exiſtence, and to form plans of conduct for the Creator of the univerſe. But the furniſhing of magazines, reviews, and even newſpapers with literary intelligence, and authors of books with dedications and prefaces, was conſidered as an employment unworthy of Johnſon. It was therefore propoſed by the bookſellers that he ſhould give a new edition of the dramas of Shakeſpeare; a work which he had projected many years before, and of which he had publiſhed a ſpecimen which was commended by Warburton. When one of his friends expreſſed a hope that this employment would furniſh him with amuſement and add to his fame, he replied, "I look upon it as I did upon the Dictionary; it is all work; and my inducement to it is not love or deſire of fame, but the want of money, which is the only motive

motive to writing that I know of." He iſſued propoſals, however, of conſiderable length; in which he ſhowed that he knew perfectly what a variety of reſearch ſuch an undertaking required: but his indolence prevented him from purſuing it with diligence, and it was not publiſhed till many years afterwards.

On the 15th of April 1758 he began a new periodical paper intitled "The Idler," which came out every Saturday in a weekly newſpaper, called "The Univerſal Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette," publiſhed by *Newbery*. Of theſe eſſays, which were continued till the 5th of April 1760, many were written as haſtily as an ordinary letter; and one in particular compoſed at Oxford was begun only half an hour before the departure of the poſt which carried it to London. About this time he had the offer of a living, of which he might have rendered himſelf capable by entering into orders. It was a rectory in a pleaſant country, of ſuch yearly value as would have been an object to one in much better circumſtances; but ſenſible, as it is ſuppoſed, of the aſperity of his temper, he declined it, ſaying, "I have not the requiſites for the office, and I cannot in my conſcience ſhear the flock which I am unable to feed."

In the month of January 1759 his mother died at the great age of 90; an event which deeply affected him, and gave birth to the 41ſt Idler, in which he laments, that "the life which made his own life pleaſant was at an end, and that the gate of death was ſhut upon his proſpects." Soon afterwards he wrote his "Raſſelas Prince of Abyſſinia," that with the profits he might defray the expence of his mother's funeral, and pay ſome debts which ſhe had left. He told a friend, that he received for the copy 100l. and 25l. more when it came to a ſecond edition; that he wrote it in the evenings of one week, ſent it to the preſs in portions as it was written, and had never ſince read it over.

Hitherto,

Hitherto, notwithſtanding his various publications, he was poor, and obliged to provide by his labour for the wants of the day that was paſſing over him; but having been early in 1762 repreſented to the king as a very learned and good man without any certain proviſion, his majeſty was pleaſed to grant him a penſion, which Lord Bute, then firſt miniſter, aſſured him "was not given for any thing which he *was to do*, but for what he *had already done*." A fixed annuity of three hundred pounds a-year, if it diminiſhed his diſtreſs, increaſed his indolence; for as he conſtantly avowed that he had no other motive for writing than to gain money, as he had now what was abundantly ſufficient for all his purpoſes, as he delighted in converſation, and was viſited and admired by the witty, the elegant, and the learned, very little of his time was paſſed in ſolitary ſtudy. Solitude was indeed his averſion; and that he might avoid it as much as poſſible, Sir Joſhua Reynolds and he, in 1764, inſtituted a club, which exiſted long without a name, but was afterwards known by the title of the *Literary Club*. It conſiſted of ſome of the moſt enlightened men of the age, who met at the Turk's Head in Gerard-ſtreet Soho, one evening in every week at ſeven, and till a late hour enjoyed "the feaſt of reaſon and the flow of ſoul."

In 1765, when Johnſon was more than uſually oppreſſed with conſtitutional melancholy, he was fortunately introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale, one of the moſt eminent brewers in England, and member of parliament for the borough of Southwark: and it is but juſtice to acknowledge, that to the aſſiſtance which Mr. and Mrs. Thrale gave him, to the ſhelter which their houſe afforded him for 16 or 17 years, and to the pains which they took to ſoothe or repreſs his uneaſy fancies, the public is probably indebted for ſome of the moſt maſterly as well as moſt popular works which he ever produced. At length, in the October

October of this year, he gave to the world his edition of Shakeſpeare, which is chiefly valuable for the preface, where the excellencies and defects of that immortal bard are diſplayed with ſuch judgment, as muſt pleaſe every man whoſe taſte is not regulated by the ſtandard of faſhion or national prejudice. In 1767 he was honoured by a private converſation with the king in the library at the queen's houſe: and two years afterwards, upon the eſtabliſhment of the Royal Academy of Painting, Sculpture, &c. he was nominated Profeſſor of Ancient Literature; an office merely honorary, and conferred on him, as is ſuppoſed, at the recommendation of his friend the preſident.

In the variety of ſubjects on which he had hitherto exerciſed his pen, he had forborne, ſince the adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole, to meddle with the diſputes of contending factions; but having ſeen with indignation the methods which, in the buſineſs of Mr. Wilkes, were taken to work upon the populace, he publiſhed in 1770 a pamphlet, intitled "The Falſe Alarm:" in which he aſſerts, and labours to prove by a variety of arguments founded on precedents, that the expulſion of a member of the houſe of commons is equivalent to excluſion, and that no ſuch calamity as the ſubverſion of the conſtitution was to be feared from an act warranted by uſage, which is the law of parliament. Whatever may be thought of the principles maintained in this publication, it unqueſtionably contains much wit and much argument, expreſſed in the author's beſt ſtyle of compoſition; and yet it is known to have been written between eight o'clock on Wedneſday night and twelve o'clock on the Thurſday night, when it was read to Mr. Thrale upon his coming from the houſe of commons. In 1771 he publiſhed another political pamphlet, intitled, "Thoughts on the late Tranſactions reſpecting Falkland's Iſlands," in which he attacked *Junius*; and he ever afterwards delighted

delighted himself with the thought of having destroyed that able writer, whom he certainly surpassed in nervous language and pointed ridicule.

In 1773, he visited with Mr. Boswell some of the most considerable of the Hebrides or Western Islands of Scotland, and published an account of his Journey in a volume which abounds in extensive philosophical views of society, ingenious sentiments, and lively description, but which offended many persons by the violent attack which it made on the authenticity of the poems attributed to Ossian. For the degree of offence that was taken, the book can hardly be thought to contain a sufficient reason: if the antiquity of these poems be yet doubted, it is owing more to the conduct of their editor than to the violence of Johnson. In 1774, the parliament being dissolved, he addressed to the electors of Great Britain a pamphlet, intitled "The Patriot;" of which the design was to guard them from imposition, and teach them to distinguish true from false patriotism. In 1775 he published "Taxation no Tyranny," in answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress. These essays drew upon him numerous attacks, all of which he heartily despised; for though it has been supposed that "A letter addressed to Dr. Samuel Johnson, occasioned by his Political Publications," gave him great uneasiness, the contrary is manifest, from his having, after the appearance of that letter, collected them into a volume with the title of "Political Tracts by the author of the Rambler." In 1765 Trinity College Dublin had created him LL.D. by *diploma*, and he now received the same honour from the University of Oxford; an honour with which, though he did not boast of it, he was highly gratified. In 1777 he was induced, by a case of a very extraordinary nature, to exercise that humanity which in him was obedient to every call. Dr. William Dodd, a clergyman under sentence of death for the crime of forgery, found means

means to intereſt Johnſon in his behalf, and procured from him two of the moſt energetic compoſitions of the kind ever ſeen; the one a petition from himſelf to the king, the other a like addreſs from his wife to the queen. Theſe petitions failed of ſucceſs.

The principal bookſellers in London having determined to publiſh a body of Engliſh Poetry, Johnſon was prevailed upon to write the Lives of the Poets, and give a character of the works of each. This taſk he undertook with alacrity, and executed it in ſuch a manner as muſt convince every competent reader, that as a biographer and a critic, no nation can produce his equal. The work was publiſhed in ten ſmall volumes, of which the firſt four came abroad 1778, and the others in 1781. While the world in general was filled with admiration of the ſtupendous powers of that man, who at the age of ſeventy-two, and labouring under a complication of diſeaſes, could produce a work which diſplays ſo much genius and ſo much learning, there were narrow circles in which prejudice and reſentment were foſtered, and whence attacks of different ſorts iſſued againſt him. Theſe gave him not the ſmalleſt diſturbance. When told of the feeble, though ſhrill, outcry that had been raiſed, he ſaid—"Sir, I conſidered myſelf as entruſted with a certain portion of truth. I have given my opinion ſincerely: let them ſhow where they think me wrong."

He had hardly begun to reap the laurels gained by this performance, when death deprived him of Mr. Thrale, in whoſe houſe he had enjoyed the moſt comfortable hours of his life.

About the middle of June 1783 his conſtitution ſuſtained a ſeverer ſhock than it had ever before felt, by a ſtroke of the palſy, ſo ſudden and ſo violent, that it awakened him out of a ſound ſleep, and rendered him for a ſhort time ſpeechleſs. As uſual, his recourſe under this affliction was to piety, which in him was con-

conſtant, ſincere, and fervent. He tried to repeat the Lord's prayer firſt in Engliſh, then in Latin, and afterwards in Greek; but ſucceeded only in the laſt attempt; immediately after which he was again deprived of the power of articulation. From this alarming attack he recovered with wonderful quickneſs, but it left behind it ſome preſages of an hydropic affection; and he was ſoon afterwards ſeized with a ſpaſmodic aſthma of ſuch violence, that he was confined to the houſe in great pain, while his dropſy increaſed, notwithſtanding all the efforts of the moſt eminent phyſicians in London and Edinburgh. He had, however, ſuch an interval of eaſe, as enabled him in the ſummer 1784 to viſit his friends at Oxford, Litchfield, and Aſhbourne in Derbyſhire.

His conſtant dread of death was ſo great, that it aſtoniſhed all who had acceſs to know the piety of his mind and the virtues of his life. Attempts have been made to account for it in various ways; but doubtleſs that is the true account which is given in the *Olla Podrida*, by an elegant and pious writer, who now adorns a high ſtation in the church of England: "That he ſhould not be conſcious of the abilities with which Providence had bleſſed him was impoſſible. He felt his own powers; he felt what he was capable of having performed; and he ſaw how little, comparatively ſpeaking, he had performed. Hence his apprehenſion on the near proſpect of the account to be made, viewed through the medium of conſtitutional and morbid melancholy, which often excluded from his ſight the bright beams of divine mercy." This, however, was the caſe only while death was approaching from ſome diſtance. From the time that he was certain it was near, all his fears were calmed; and he died on the 13th of December 1784, full of reſignation, ſtrengthened by faith, and joyful in hope.

For

For a juſt character of this great man our limits afford not room: we muſt therefore content ourſelves with laying before our readers a very ſhort ſketch. His ſtature was tall, his limbs were large, his ſtrength was more than common, and his activity in early life had been greater than ſuch a form gave reaſon to expect: but he was ſubject to an infirmity of the convulſive kind, reſembling the diſtemper called St. Vitus's dance; and he had the ſeeds of ſo many diſeaſes ſown in his conſtitution, that a ſhort time before his death he declared that he hardly remembered to have paſſed one day wholly free from pain. He poſſeſſed very extraordinary powers of underſtanding; which were much cultivated by reading, and ſtill more by meditation and reflection. His memory was remarkably retentive, his imagination uncommonly vigorous, and his judgement keen and penetrating. He read with great rapidity, retained with wonderful exactneſs what he ſo eaſily collected, and poſſeſſed the power of reducing to order and ſyſtem the ſcattered hints on any ſubject which he had gathered from different books. It would not perhaps be ſafe to claim for him the higheſt place, among his contemporaries, in any *ſingle* department of literature; but, to uſe one of his own expreſſions, he brought more *mind* to every ſubject, and had a greater variety of knowledge *ready* for all occaſions, than any other man that could be eaſily named.—Though prone to ſuperſtition, he was in all other reſpects ſo remarkably incredulous, that Hogarth ſaid, while Johnſon firmly believed the Bible, he ſeemed determined to believe nothing but the Bible. Of the importance of religion he had a ſtrong ſenſe, and his zeal for its intereſts were always awake, ſo that profaneneſs of every kind was abaſhed in his preſence.—The ſame energy which was diſplayed in his literary productions, was exhibited alſo in his converſation, which was various, ſtriking, and inſtructive: like the

ſage

ſage in Raſſelas, he ſpoke, and attention watched his lips; he reaſoned, and conviction cloſed his periods: when he pleaſed, he could be the greateſt ſophiſt that ever contended in the liſts of declamation; and perhaps no man ever equalled him in nervous and pointed repartees. His veracity, from the moſt trivial to the moſt ſolemn occaſions, was ſtrict even to ſeverity: he ſcorned to embelliſh a ſtory with fictitious circumſtances; for what is not a repreſentation of reality, he uſed to ſay, is not worthy of our attention. As his purſe and his houſe were ever open to the indigent, ſo was his heart tender to thoſe who wanted relief, and his ſoul was ſuſceptible of gratitude and every kind impreſſion. He had a roughneſs in his manner which ſubdued the ſaucy and terrified the meek: but it was *only* in his *manner*; for no man was more loved than Johnſon was by thoſe who knew him; and his works will be read with veneration for their author as long as the language in which they are written ſhall be underſtood.

CON-

CONTENTS.

	Page
COWLEY	1
WALLER	9
MILTON	20
BUTLER	36
DRYDEN	40
DENHAM	54
SPRAT	57
ROSCOMMON	59
ROCHESTER	61
YALDEN	64
OTWAY	65
DUKE	68
DORSET	ibid
HALIFAX	70
STEPNEY	72
WALSH	73
GARTH	74
KING	76
JOHN PHILIPS	78
SMITH	80
POMFRET	83
HUGHES	84
ADDISON	86
BLACKMORE	101
SHEFFIELD, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE	105

Page
GRANVILLE - - - - - - 109
ROWE - - - - - - - 111
TICKELL - - - - - - 116
CONGREVE - - - - - - 118
FENTON - - - - - - 123
PRIOR - - - - - - - 125
POPE - - - - - - - 134
SWIFT - - - - - - 151
GAY - - - - - - - 165
BROOME - - - - - - 170
PITT - - - - - - - 172
PARNELL - - - - - - 173
AMBROSE PHILIPS - - - - 176
WATTS - - - - - - 179
SAVAGE - - - - - - 182
SOMERVILE - - - - - 205
THOMSON - - - - - - 206
HAMMOND - - - - - - 211
COLLINS - - - - - - 213
YOUNG - - - - - - 215
DYER - - - - - - - 222
MALLET - - - - - - 224
SHENSTONE - - - - - 226
AKENSIDE - - - - - - 229
LYTTLETON - - - - - 231
WEST - - - - - - 234
GRAY - - - - - - 235

LIVES

LIVES

OF THE

ENGLISH POETS,

&c. &c.

OF

COWLEY.

ABRAHAM COWLEY was born in the year 1618 *. His father, a grocer, died before the birth of our poet, who was conſequently left to the care of his mother, a woman who ſtruggled hard to procure him a literary education. Her ſolicitude, however, was rewarded; for ſhe had the gratification of living to ſee him arrive at eminence, and, no doubt, of partaking in his proſperity.

The youth very early took delight in reading "Spenſer's Fairy Queen," and, thus feeling the charms of verſe, became, as he himſelf tells us, "irrecoverably a poet." On his mother's ſolicitation he was admitted into Weſtminſter School, where he ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf, and publiſhed a volume of Poems in his thirteenth year, containing, among other compoſitions, "The Tragical Hiſtory of Pyramus and Thiſbe," written when he was ten years old; and "Conſtantia and Philetus," written two years after.

* Dr. Johnſon does not mention the place of his birth, but other reſpectable authorities inform us, that it was in Fleet-ſtreet, near the end of Chancery-lane.

While at ſchool, he alſo produced a comedy called "Love's Riddle," though this was not publiſhed till he had been ſome time at Cambridge, to which place he was removed in 1636, and where he continued his ſtudies with great intenſeneſs; for he is ſaid to have written, while a young ſtudent, the greater part of his "Davideis," a work which proves him to have poſſeſſed a mind of the greateſt vigour and activity.

Two years after his ſettlement at Cambridge, he publiſhed "Love's Riddle," with a poetical dedication to Sir Kenelm Digby, and alſo a Latin comedy, entitled "Naufragium Joculare." This was printed, with a dedication in verſe to Dr. Comber, maſter of the college; but it did not add much to his reputation.

At the beginning of the civil war, as the Prince paſſed through Cambridge in his way to York, he was entertained with the repreſentation of the "Guardian," a comedy, which Cowley ſays was neither written nor acted, but rough drawn by him, and repeated by the ſcholars. He had no opinion of it himſelf, although, during the ſuppreſſion of the theatres, it was ſometimes privately acted with ſufficient approbation.

In 1643, being then Maſter of Arts, he was, by the prevalence of the Parliament, ejected from Cambridge. He then entered himſelf at St. John's College, Oxford, where, it is ſaid, he publiſhed a ſatire called "the Puritan and Papiſt," and diſtinguiſhed himſelf equally by the warmth of his loyalty and the elegance of his converſation.

When Oxford was ſurrendered to the Parliament, he followed the Queen to Paris, where he became ſecretary to the Lord Jermin, afterwards Earl of St. Alban's, and where he was employed in cyphering and decyphering the letters that paſſed between the king and queen, a ſituation certainly of the higheſt confidence and honour.

In

In the year 1647, his "Miſtreſs" was publiſhed.

We do not find any thing worth relating during his ſtay in Paris, from which place he was ſent back into England in 1656, that (according to Sprat), under pretence of privacy and retirement, he might take occaſion of giving notice of the poſture of things in this country.

Soon after his return to London he was ſeized by ſome meſſengers of the uſurping powers, who had been ſent out in queſt of another man; and being examined, he was put into confinement, from which he was not diſmiſſed without the ſecurity of a thouſand pounds, which was given by Dr. Scarborow.

This year he publiſhed his poems, and afterwards took upon himſelf the character of a phyſician, though with no intention, as is ſuppoſed, of ever attempting to practiſe. He now began to ſtudy botany, and retired into Kent to gather plants; but his inclination for poetry ſoon abſorbed all other conſiderations, and he compoſed ſeveral Latin verſes on the qualities of herbs and the beauties of flowers.

At the Reſtoration, after all his diligence and long ſervice, he naturally expected ample preferments; but found his reward very tediouſly delayed, owing, as it was ſuppoſed, to a ſuſpicion that his loyalty at one time experienced ſome relaxation. The neglect of the Court, however, was not his only mortification. Having newly fitted his old comedy of "the Guardian" for the ſtage, he brought it forward under the title of "the Cutter of Coleman-ſtreet," and it was badly received; which ill ſucceſs he did not bear, as Dryden ſays, "with ſo much firmneſs as might have been expected from ſo great a man."

In conſequence of the rejection of his play, and his not enjoying much of the confidence of the royal party, his vehement deſire of retirement once more came upon him, and he ſettled at Chertſey, in Surrey. His retreat

was at firſt but ſlenderly accommodated; yet he ſoon obtained, by the Earl of St. Alban's and the Duke of Buckingham, ſuch a leaſe of the Queen's lands, as afforded him an ample income. He did not, however, long enjoy the pleaſure of ſolitude, for he died at the Porch-houſe (late in the poſſeſſion of Alderman Clark) in Chertſey, in 1667, in the 49th year of his age, and was buried with great pomp near Chaucer and Spenſer. King Charles is ſaid to have pronounced, "that Mr. Cowley had not left a better man behind him in England."

"In the general review of Cowley's poetry," ſays Dr. Johnſon, "it will be found, that he wrote with abundant fertility, but negligent or unſkilful ſelection; with much thought, but with little imagery; that he is never pathetick, and rarely ſublime; but always either ingenious or learned, either acute or profound.

"It is ſaid by Denham in his elegy,

> "To him no Author was unknown;
> "Yet what he writ was all his own."

"This wide poſition requires leſs limitation when it is affirmed of Cowley than perhaps of any other poet. He read much, and yet borrowed little.

"His character of writing was indeed not his own: he unhappily adopted that which was predominant. He ſaw a certain way to preſent praiſe, and, not ſufficiently enquiring by what means the ancients have continued to delight in all the changes of human manners, he contented himſelf with a deciduous* laurel, of which the verdure in its ſpring was bright and gay, but which time has been continually ſtealing from his brows.

"He was in his own time conſidered as of unrivalled excellence. Clarendon repreſents him as having

* Falling, not perennial.

taken

taken a flight beyond all that went before him; and Milton is ſaid to have declared, that the greateſt Engliſh poets were "Spenſer, Shakeſpeare and Cowley.

"His manner he had in common with others, but his ſentiments were his own. Upon every ſubject he thought for himſelf; and ſuch was his copiouſneſs of knowledge, that ſomething at once remote and applicable ruſhed into his mind; yet it is not likely that he always rejected a commodious idea, merely becauſe another had uſed it: his known wealth was ſo great, that he might have borrowed without loſs of credit."

Dr. Johnſon gives it as his opinion, that the laſt lines of Cowley's elegy on Sir Henry Wotton were copied from the noble epigram of Grotius upon the death of Scaliger, and that a particular paſſage from the poem of the "Miſtreſs" is borrowed from Donne. He then proceeds thus:

"It is related by Clarendon, that Cowley always acknowledged his obligation to the learning and induſtry of Jonſon, but I have found no traces of Jonſon in his works; to emulate Donne appears to have been his purpoſe; and from Donne he may have learned that familiarity with religious images, and that light alluſion to ſacred things, by which readers far ſhort of ſanctity are frequently offended; and which would not be borne in the preſent age, when devotion, perhaps not more fervent, is more delicate."

"His diction was, in his own time, cenſured as negligent. He ſeems not to have known, or not to have conſidered, that words being arbitrary muſt owe their power to aſſociation, and have the influence, and that only, which cuſtom has given them. Language is the dreſs of thought; and as the nobleſt mien, or moſt graceful action, would be degraded and obſcured by a garb appropriated to the groſs employments of ruſticks or mechanicks, ſo the moſt heroick ſentiments will loſe their efficacy, and the moſt ſplendid ideas drop

their magnificence, if they are conveyed by words uſed commonly upon low and trivial occaſions, by vulgar mouths, and contaminated by vulgar applications."

"He makes no ſelection of words, nor ſeeks any neatneſs of phraſe. He has no elegancies either lucky or elaborate; as his endeavours were rather to impreſs ſentences upon the underſtanding, than images on the fancy, he has few epithets, and thoſe ſcattered without peculiar propriety or nice adaptation. It ſeems to follow from the neceſſity of the ſubject, rather than the care of the writer, that the diction of his heroic poem is leſs familiar than that of his ſlighteſt writings. He has given not the ſame numbers, but the ſame diction, to the gentle Anacreon and the tempeſtuous Pindar.

"His verſification ſeems to have had very little of his care; and, if what he thinks be true, that his numbers are unmuſical only when they are ill read, the art of reading them is, at preſent, loſt, for they are commonly harſh to modern ears. He has, indeed, many noble lines, ſuch as the feeble care of Waller never could produce. The bulk of his thoughts ſometimes ſwelled his verſe to unexpected and inevitable grandeur; but his excellence of this kind is merely fortuitous: he ſinks willingly down to his general careleſſneſs, and avoids with very little care either meanneſs or aſperity.

"His contractions are often rugged and harſh;

> One flings a mountain, and its river too
> Torn up with't——.

"His rhymes are very often made by pronouns or particles, or the like unimportant words which diſappoint the ear, and deſtroy the energy of the line.

"His combination of different meaſures is ſometimes diſſonant and unpleaſing; he joins verſes together, of which the former does not ſlide eaſily into the latter.

"The

" The words *do* and *did*, which ſo much degrade in preſent eſtimation the line that admits them, were in the time of Cowley little cenſured or avoided; how often he uſed them, and with how bad an effect, at leaſt to our ears, will appear by a paſſage, in which every reader will lament to ſee juſt and noble thoughts defrauded of their praiſe by inelegance of language."

The acute Critic produces the paſſage alluded to, of which, however, it may be ſufficient in this Abridgement to ſay, that it conſiſts of ſixteen lines, and that the word *does* occurs no leſs than ſix times, in the awkward manner on which the doctor has ſo juſtly beſtowed cenſure.

" His heroic lines," he goes on to ſay, " are often formed of monoſyllables, but yet they are ſometimes ſweet and ſonorous.

" He ſays of the Meſſiah,

> Round the whole earth his dreaded name ſhall ſound,
> *And reach to worlds that muſt not yet be found;*

" In another place, of David:

> Yet bid him go ſecurely, when he ſends;
> *'Tis Saul that is his foe, and we his friends.*
> *The man who has his God, no aid can lack,*
> *And we who bid him go, will bring him back.*"

The Critic remarks on Cowley's own account of his attempts *to paint in the number the nature of the thing which it deſcribes*, and thus proceeds:

" Cowley was, I believe, the firſt poet that mingled Alexandrines at pleaſure with the common heroick of ten ſyllables, and from him Dryden borrowed the practice, whether ornamental or licentious. He conſidered the verſe of twelve ſyllables as elevated and majeſtic, and has therefore deviated into that meaſure, when he ſuppoſes the voice heard of the Supreme Being."

He then makes some observations on the poem of the "Davideis," and concludes his criticisms on Cowley as follows:

"After so much criticism on his Poems, the Essays which accompany them must not be forgotten. What is said by Sprat of his conversation, that no man could draw from it any suspicion of his excellence in poetry, may be applied to these compositions. No author ever kept his verse and his prose at a greater distance from each other. His thoughts are natural, and his style has a smooth and placid equability, which has never yet obtained its due commendation. Nothing is far sought, or hard laboured; but all is easy without feebleness, and familiar without grossness.

"It has been observed by Felton, in his "Essay on the Classicks," that Cowley was beloved by every muse that he courted, and that he has rivalled the Ancients in every kind of poetry but tragedy.

"It may be affirmed, without any encomiastick fervour, that he brought to his poetic labours a mind replete with learning, and that his pages are embellished with all the ornaments which books could supply; that he was the first who imparted to English numbers the enthusiasm of the greater ode, and the gaiety of the less; that he was equally qualified for sprightly sallies and for lofty flights; that he was among those who freed translation from servility, and, instead of following his Author at a distance, walked by his side; and that if he left versification yet improveable, he left likewise, from time to time, such specimens of excellence, as enabled succeeding poets to improve it.

WALLER.

WALLER.

EDMUND WALLER was born on the 3d of March, 1605, at Colſhill, in Hertfordſhire. His father was Robert Waller, Eſq. of Agmondeſham, in Buckinghamſhire, whoſe family was originally a branch of the Kentiſh Wallers; and his mother was the daughter of John Hampden, of Hampden, in the ſame county, and ſiſter to Hampden "the zealot of rebellion*."

His father died while he was an infant, but left him an early income of three thouſand five hundred pounds, which may be reckoned more than equivalent to ten thouſand of the preſent time.

He was educated, by the care of his mother, at Eton; and removed afterwards to King's College, in Cambridge. He was ſent to parliament in his eighteenth, if not in his ſixteenth year, and often frequented the court of James the Firſt. His political and poetical life began nearly together. In his eighteenth year he wrote the poem that appears firſt in his works, on

* This harſh epithet of Dr. Johnſon ſhould not be ſuffered to paſs without ſome obſervation. The riſing generation, for whoſe uſe this Abridgement is eſſentially calculated, will probably conſider the character of Hampden as leſs opprobrious, than the able critic (but certainly not unbiaſſed man) has here repreſented it. Perhaps poſterity will rather conſider Hampden as the ſtrenuous, yet temperate aſſertor of the liberties of his country. Clarendon ſays, "that Mr. Hampden carried himſelf throughout the whole buſineſs of the ſhip-money with ſuch *ſingular temper and modeſty*, that he actually obtained more credit and advantage by loſing it, than the king did ſervice by gaining it."

"In ſuch reſpect is the memory of Hampden ſtill held by his grateful countrymen, that ſome years ago, one of his deſcendants being deficient in an account of public money, he was exonerated from the debt due to government by an act of parliament, particularly expreſſing, that it was for the *ſervices* his illuſtrious relation had done to his country, that this mark of favour was ſhewn to him."—SEWARD'S ANECDOTES OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS, Vol. III. Page 276.

"The Prince's Eſcape at St. Andero," a piece in which his verſification was ſuch as it appears in his laſt performances.

His next poem is ſuppoſed to be "The Addreſs to the Queen," written in his twentieth year, and we have no date of any other poetical production before that which the murder of the Duke of Buckingham occaſioned.

Waller, although rich by inheritance, took care early to grow richer by marrying Mrs. Banks, a great heireſs in the City. Having brought him a ſon, who died young, and a daughter, who was afterwards married to Mr. Dormer, of Oxfordſhire, ſhe died in child-bed, and left him a widower of about five and twenty.

Being too young to reſiſt beauty, he found himſelf captivated by the Lady Dorothea Sydney, eldeſt daughter of the Earl of Leiceſter, whom he courted by all the poetry in which *Sachariſſa* is celebrated. She, however, rejected his addreſſes, it is ſaid, with diſdain, and married in 1636 the Earl of Sunderland, who died at Newberry in the king's cauſe. In her old age, meeting with Waller, ſhe aſked him when he would again write ſuch verſes upon her; "when you are as young, madam," ſaid he, "and as handſome as you were then *."

It

* The marriage of Sachariſſa to Lord Sunderland, which took place at PENSHURST, the ancient ſeat of the Sydney family, in Kent, produced from Waller the following letter, which he addreſſed to Lady Lucy Sydney, the ſiſter of Sachariſſa. We inſert it here as one of the prettieſt pieces of gallantry and moſt elegantly turned compliments we ever met with.

"MADAM,

"IN this common joy at Penſhurſt, I know none to whom complaints may come leſs unſeaſonable than to your ladyſhip, the loſs of a bedfellow being almoſt equal to that of a miſtreſs; and therefore you ought at leaſt to pardon, if you conſent not to the imprecations

It is collected from the verſes written at Penſhurſt, that he diverted his diſappointment by a voyage; but Johnſon appears to think it more likely, "that he amuſed himſelf with forming an imaginary ſcene, than that ſo important an incident, as a viſit to America, ſhould have been left floating in conjectural probability."

From his twenty-eighth to his thirty-fifth year he wrote his pieces on "the Reduction of Sallee; on the Reparation of St. Paul's; to the King on his Navy; the Panegyric on the Queen Mother; the two Poems to the Earl of Northumberland; and, perhaps, others, of which the time cannot be diſcovered."

When he had loſt all hopes of *Sachariſſa*, he looked round him for an eaſier conqueſt, and gained a lady of the family of Breſſe, or Breaux, by whom he had five ſons and eight daughters.

precations of the deſerted, which juſt Heaven no doubt will hear.—May my lady Dorothy, if we may yet call her ſo, ſuffer as much, and have the like paſſion for this young lord, whom ſhe has preferred to the reſt of mankind, as others have had for her; and may his love before the year go about, make her taſte of the firſt curſe impoſed upon womankind, the pains of becoming a mother.—May her firſt born be none of her own ſex, nor ſo like her, but that he may reſemble her lord as much as herſelf.—May ſhe, that always affected ſilence and retiredneſs, have the houſe filled with the noiſe and number of her children, and hereafter of her grandchildren; and then may ſhe arrive at that great curſe, ſo much declined by fair ladies, old age; may ſhe live to be very old, and yet ſeem young; be told ſo by her glaſs, and have no aches to inform her of the truth; and when ſhe ſhall appear to be mortal, may her lord not mourn for her, but go hand in hand with her to that place, where, we are told, there is no marrying nor giving in marriage, that being there divorced, we all may have an equal intereſt in her again! My revenge being immortal, I wiſh all this may befal her poſterity to the world's end, and afterwards!—To you, Madam, I wiſh all good things, and that this loſs may, in good time, be happily ſupplied with a more conſtant bedfellow of the other ſex. Madam, I humbly kiſs your hands, and beg pardon for this trouble, from

"Your Ladyſhip's
"Moſt humble Servant,
"EDMOND WALLER."

At the time the parliament was called, in 1640, it appeared that his political character had not been miſtaken, the courtiers imagining him hoſtile to them, from his being conſidered as the kinſman of Hampden. The king's demand of a ſupply induced Waller to deliver a moſt vehement ſpeech, the great poſition of which was, that grievances ought to be redreſſed before ſupplies are granted.

In the long parliament, which, unhappily for the nation, met Nov. 3, 1640, he repreſented Agmondeſham the third time. Although a ſupporter of the diſcontented party, he did not, however, adopt all their opinions. When the great queſtion, whether epiſcopacy ought to be aboliſhed, was debated, he ſpoke againſt the innovation ſo coolly, ſo reaſonably, and ſo firmly, that we are ſorry our narrow limits will not permit us to inſert the ſpeech.

It cannot but be wiſhed, that he who could ſpeak ſo well had been able to act with ſpirit and uniformity.

When the commons began to ſet the royal authority at open defiance, Waller is ſaid to have withdrawn from the houſe, and to have returned with the king's permiſſion; and when the king ſat up his ſtandard, he ſent him a thouſand broad pieces. He continued, however, to ſit in the rebellious conventicle, but ſpoke with great freedom againſt the ſenſe and ſpirit of the houſe.

The engagement known by the name of Waller's plot was now diſcovered, when he, together with his brother-in-law, Tomkyns, was apprehended. Waller, it is ſaid, was ſo confounded with fear, that he made a humiliating confeſſion of all he knew of the buſineſs, accuſed the Earl of Portland, and Lord Conway, as co-operating in the tranſaction; and teſtified, that the Earl of Northumberland had declared himſelf diſpoſed in favour of any attempt that might check the violence of the parliament, and reconcile them to the king.

The

The Earl of Portland and Lord Conway denied the charge, and, no teſtimony but Waller's appearing againſt them, were, after a long impriſonment, admitted to bail. Tomkyns was hanged at his own door. The Earl of Northumberland being "too great for proſecution," as Johnſon terms it, was only once examined before the lords.

"Waller, though confeſſedly," ſays Clarendon, "the moſt guilty, with incredible diſſimulation affected ſuch a remorſe of conſcience, that his trial was put off, out of chriſtian compaſſion, till he might recover his underſtanding." When brought before the houſe, he confeſſed and lamented, and ſubmitted, and implored.—He was, however, expelled the commons, and afterwards tried by a *council of war*, condemned, and reprieved by Eſſex; but after a year's impriſonment, in which time reſentment grew leſs acrimonious, paying a fine of 10,000l. he was permitted *to recollect himſelf in another country*.

For the place of his exile he choſe France, and ſtaid ſome time at Roan, where his daughter Margaret was born, who was afterwards his favourite and his amanuenſis. He then removed to Paris, where he lived with great ſplendour and hoſpitality; and from time to time amuſed himſelf with poetry, in which he ſometimes ſpeaks of the rebels, and their uſurpation, in the natural language of an honeſt man.

At laſt it became neceſſary, for his ſupport, to ſell his wife's jewels; and being reduced, as he ſaid, at laſt to the *rump-jewel*, he ſolicited, from Cromwell, permiſſion to return, and obtained it by the intereſt of Colonel Scroop, to whom his ſiſter was married. Upon the remains of his fortune he lived at Hall Barn, a houſe built by himſelf very near to Beaconsfield, where his mother reſided. His mother, though related to Cromwell and Hampden, was zealous for the royal cauſe, and uſed to reproach Cromwell whenever he viſited her; he

he, in return, would throw a napkin at her, and say *he would not diſpute with his aunt*; but finding, in time, that ſhe acted for the king as well as talked, he made her a priſoner to her own daughter in her own houſe.

Cromwell, now Protector, received Waller as his kinſman to familiar converſation. Waller, as he uſed to relate, found him ſufficiently verſed in ancient hiſtory; and when any of his enthuſiaſtic friends came to adviſe or conſult him, he could ſometimes overhear him diſcourſing in the cant of the times; but when he returned he would ſay, "Couſin Waller, I muſt talk to theſe men in their own way;" and renewed the common ſtyle of converſation.

He repaid the protector for his favours (1654) by the famous Panegyric, which has always been conſidered as the firſt of his poetical productions. In the poem on the war with Spain are ſome paſſages at leaſt equal to the beſt parts of the panegyric; and in the concluſion, the poet ventures yet a higher flight of flattery, by recommending royalty to Cromwell and the nation. Cromwell, although very deſirous of adding the title to the power of monarchy, was ſtill afraid of realizing his wiſhes. When, therefore, a deputation was ſolemnly ſent to invite him to the crown, he, after a long conference, refuſed it; but he is ſaid to have fainted in his coach when he parted from them.

The poem on the death of the Protector, ſeems to have been dictated by real veneration for his memory. Soon after, the Reſtoration ſupplied him with another ſubject; and he exerted his imagination, his elegance, and his melody, with equal alacrity for Charles the Second. It is not poſſible to read, without ſome contempt and indignation, poems of the ſame author, aſcribing the higheſt degree of *power* and *piety* to Charles the Firſt; then transferring the ſame *power* and *piety* to Oliver Cromwell; now inviting Oliver to take the crown; and then congratulating Charles the Second on his

his recovered right. Neither Cromwell nor Charles could value his teſtimony as the effect of conviction, or receive his praiſes as effuſions of reverence; they could conſider them but as the labour of invention, and the tribute of dependance.

The Congratulation was conſidered as inferior, in poetical merit, to the Panegyric; and it is reported, that when the king told Waller of the diſparity, he anſwered, "*poets* ſucceed better in fiction, than in truth."

In the firſt parliament ſummoned by Charles the Second, (March 8, 1661.) Waller ſat for Haſtings in Suſſex, and ſerved, in different places, in all the parliaments of that reign. His wit led him into the beſt company, and although he drank water he was enabled, by his fertility of mind, to brighten the mirth of Bacchanalian aſſemblies; and Mr. Saville ſaid, that *no man in England ſhould keep him company without drink, but Ned Waller.*

"In parliament he was," ſays Burnet, "the delight of the houſe, and, though old, ſaid the livelieſt things of any among them." His abilities diſplayed rather ſallies of gaiety than cogency of argument.

He was of ſuch conſideration that his remarks were circulated and recorded. When the Duke of York's influence was high, both in Scotland and England, "it drew," ſays Burnet, "a lively reflection from Waller, the celebrated wit. He ſaid, the houſe of commons had reſolved that the duke ſhould not reign after the king's death; but the king, in oppoſition to them, had reſolved that he ſhould reign even in his life."

In the year 1665, he aſked from the king the Provoſtſhip of Eton College, which was granted; but Clarendon refuſed to put the ſeal, alledging that it could be held only by a clergyman. To this oppoſition is imputed the violence and acrimony with which Waller joined Buckingham's faction in the proſecution of Clarendon. A year after the chancellor's baniſhment, another

another vacancy gave him encouragement for another petition, which the king referred to the council, who, after hearing the queſtion argued by lawyers for three days, determined that the office could be held only by a clergyman, according to the act of conformity, ſince the provoſt had always received inſtitution, as for a patronage, from the Biſhops of Lincoln. The king then ſaid he could not break the law which he had made.

At the Acceſſion of King James (in 1685) he was choſen for parliament, being then fourſcore, at Saltaſh in Cornwall, and wrote "A preſage of the downfal of the Turkiſh empire." It is remarked by his commentator, Fenton, that in reading Taſſo, he had early imbibed a veneration for the heroes of the holy war, and a zealous enmity to the Turks, which never left him.

James treated him with kindneſs and familiarity. One day, taking him into the cloſet, the king aſked him how he liked one of the pictures. "My eyes," ſaid Waller, "are dim, and I do not know it." The king ſaid it was the princeſs of Orange. "She is," "ſaid Waller, "like the greateſt woman in the world." The king aſked who that was, and being anſwered Queen Elizabeth, "I wonder," ſaid the king, "you ſhould think ſo; but I muſt confeſs ſhe had a wiſe council." "And, ſir," ſaid Waller, "did you ever know a fool chuſe a wiſe one?"

When the king knew that he was about to marry his daughter to Dr. Birch, a clergyman, he ordered a French gentleman to tell him, "that the king wondered he could think of marrying his daughter to a falling church!" "The king," ſays Waller, "does me great honour in taking notice of my domeſtic affairs; but I have lived long enough to obſerve, that this falling church has got a trick of riſing again."

Whether he was privy to any of the tranſactions which ended in the Revolution, is not known. His heir joined the Prince of Orange.

He

He now ſeemed to have turned his mind upon preparation for a future ſtate, and therefore conſecrated his poetry to devotion. The lines which he compoſed when *he, for age, could neither read nor write*, are not inferior to the effuſions of his youth.

Towards the decline of life he bought a ſmall houſe, with a little land, at Colſhill; and ſaid, "he ſhould be glad to die like the ſtag, where he was rouſed." This, however, did not happen. When he was at Beaconſfield, he found his legs grow tumid. He went to Windſor, where Sir Charles Scarborough then attended the king, and requeſted him, as both a friend and a phyſician, to tell him "what that ſwelling meant."—"Sir," anſwered Scarborough, "your blood will run no longer." Waller repeated ſome lines of Virgil, and went home to die. His deceaſe happened on the 21ſt of October, 1687, and he was interred at Beaconsfield.

"The characters," ſays Johnſon, "by which Waller intended to diſtinguiſh his writings, are ſprightlineſs and dignity; in his ſmaller pieces he endeavours to be gay, in the larger to be great. Of his airy and light productions, the chief courſe is gallantry, that attentive reverence of female excellence which has deſcended to us from the Gothic age. As his poems are commonly occaſional, and his addreſſes perſonal, he was not ſo liberally ſupplied with grand as with ſoft images; for beauty is more eaſily found than magnanimity.

"The delicacy which he cultivated reſtrains him to a certain nicety and caution, even when he writes upon the ſlighteſt matter. He has, therefore, in his whole volume, nothing burleſque, and ſeldom any thing ludicrous or familiar. He ſeems always to do his beſt, though his ſubjects are often unworthy of his care. His ſubjects were generally trifling, and his numbers not always muſical. His thoughts are ſometimes hyperbolical, and his images unnatural.

"His ſallies of caſual flattery are ſometimes elegant and happy, as that "In return for the Silver Pen;" and ſome-

ſometimes empty and trifling, as that "Upon the Card torn by the Queen." There are a few lines "written in the Ducheſs's Taſſo," which he is ſaid, by Fenton, to have kept a ſummer under correction. Johnſon gives it as his opinion, in oppoſition to that of Fenton, that *Waller appears not to have loſt at eighty-two any part of his poetical powers.* After lamenting that verſe, when applied to the purpoſes of worſhip, has not been hitherto attended with ſucceſs, he again more particularly recurs to the poet who is the preſent ſubject of conſideration.

"As much of Waller's reputation was owed to the ſoftneſs and ſmoothneſs of his numbers, it is proper to conſider thoſe minute particulars to which a verſifier muſt attend.

"He certainly very much excelled in ſmoothneſs moſt of the writers who were living when his poetry commenced. The poets of Elizabeth had attained an art of modulation which was afterwards neglected or forgotten. Fairfax was acknowledged by him as his model; and he might have ſtudied, with advantage, the poem of Davies*, which, though merely philoſophical, yet ſeldom leaves the ear ungratified.

"But he was rather ſmooth than ſtrong; of *the full reſounding line*, which Pope attributes to Dryden, he has given but very few examples. The critical deciſion has given the praiſe of ſtrength to Denham, and of ſweetneſs to Waller.

"His excellence of verſification has ſome abatements. He uſes the expletive *do* very frequently; and, though he lived to ſee it almoſt univerſally ejected, was not more careful to avoid it in his laſt compoſitions than in his firſt. Praiſe had given him confidence; and finding the world ſatisfied, he ſatisfied himſelf.

* Sir John Davies. The title of the poem here alluded to is "Noſce teipſum."

"His

" His rhymes are, ſometimes, weak words. *So* is found to make the rhyme twice in ten lines, and occurs often as a rhyme through his book.

" His double rhymes, in heroic verſe, have been cenſured by Mrs. Philips, who was his rival in the tranſlation of Corneille's Pompey; and more faults might be found, were not the enquiry below attention.

" He ſometimes uſes the obſolete termination of verbs, as *waxeth*, *affecteth*; and, ſometimes, retains the final ſyllable of the preterite, as *amazed*, *ſuppoſed*; of which I know not whether it is not to the detriment of our language that we have totally rejected them.

" Of triplets he is ſparing; but he did not wholly forbear them: of an Alexandrine he has given no example.

" The general character of his poetry is elegance and gaiety. He is never pathetic, and very rarely ſublime. He ſeems neither to have had a mind much elevated by nature, nor amplified by learning. His thoughts are ſuch as a liberal converſation, and large acquaintance with life, would eaſily ſupply. They had, however, then, perhaps, that grace of novelty which they are now often ſuppoſed to want, by thoſe who, having already found them in later books, do not know or enquire who produced them firſt. This treatment is unjuſt. Let not the original author loſe by his imitators.

" Praiſe, however, ſhould be due before it is given. The author of Waller's life aſcribes to him the firſt practice of what Ærythræus, and ſome late critics, call *alliteration*, of uſing in the ſame verſe many words beginning with the ſame letter. But this knack, whatever be its value, was ſo frequent among our early writers, that Gaſcoigne, a writer of the 16th century, warns the young poet againſt affecting it; and Shakeſpeare, in the "Midſummer Night's Dream," is ſuppoſed to ridicule it.

" Waller

"Waller borrows too many of his ſentiments and illuſtrations from the old mythology, for which it is vain to plead the example of the ancient poets; the deities which they introduced ſo frequently were conſidered as realities, ſo far as to be received by the imagination, whatever ſober reaſon might even then determine. But of theſe images time has tarniſhed the ſplendour. A fiction not only detected, but deſpiſed, can never afford a ſolid baſis to any poſition; though, ſometimes, it may furniſh a tranſient alluſion or ſlight illuſtration. No modern monarch can be much exalted by hearing that as Hercules had his *club*, he has his *navy*.

"But of the praiſe of Waller, though much may be taken away, much will remain; for it cannot be denied that he added ſomething to our elegance of diction, and ſomething to our propriety of thought; and to him may be applied what Taſſo ſaid, with equal ſpirit and juſtice of himſelf and Guarini, when, having peruſed the "Paſtor Fido," he cried out, "if he had not read Aminta, he had not excelled it."

MILTON.

JOHN MILTON was, by birth, a gentleman, being deſcended from the proprietors of Milton, near Thame, in Oxfordſhire, one of whom forfeited his eſtate in the times of York and Lancaſter.

His grandfather John was keeper of the foreſt of Shotover, a zealous papiſt, who diſinherited his ſon becauſe he had forſaken the religion of his anceſtors.

His father John, who was the ſon diſinherited, had recourſe, for his ſupport, to the profeſſion of a ſcrivener. He was a man eminent for his ſkill in muſic, and his reputation in his profeſſion was ſuch, that he grew rich, and

and retired to an eſtate. He married a gentlewoman of the name of Caſton, a Welch family, by whom he had two ſons, John the poet, and Chriſtopher who ſtudied the law; and, likewiſe, a daughter Anne.

John, the poet, was born in his father's houſe, at the Spread Eagle, in Bread Street, Dec. 9, 1608, between ſix and ſeven in the morning. His father had him inſtructed, at firſt, by private tuition, and then ſent him to St. Paul's ſchool, under the care of Mr. Gill. He was removed, in the beginning of his 16th year, to Chriſt College, Cambridge, where he entered a penſioner Feb. 12, 1624.

He was, at this time, eminently ſkilled in the Latin tongue; but the products of his vernal fertility have been ſurpaſſed by many, and particularly by his contemporary Cowley.

At fifteen, a date which he uſes till he is ſixteen, he tranſlated, or verſified, two pſalms, 114, and 136, and many of his elegies appear to have been written in his eighteenth year. Milton is ſaid to be the firſt Engliſhman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verſes with claſſic elegance.

He complains of the unkindneſs with which he was treated in the univerſity. It is ſaid, that he was the laſt ſtudent, in either univerſity, that ſuffered the public indignity of corporeal correction, and 'tis certain, for what reaſon we know not, that he incurred *ruſtication*, a temporary diſmiſſion into the country, with, perhaps, the loſs of a term.

Weary, as he declares, of enduring *the threats of a rigorous maſter, and ſomething elſe, which a temper like his could not undergo*, after taking both the uſual degrees, that of Bachelor in 1628, and that of Maſter in 1632, he left the Univerſity, with no kindneſs for its inſtitution. He firſt went there with a deſign of entering into the church, but in time altered his mind, in conſequence of

of thinking he could not, with a ſafe conſcience, ſubſcribe to ſome of the articles.

When he left the univerſity he returned to his father, then reſiding at Horton in Buckinghamſhire, with whom he lived five years; in which time he is ſaid to have read all the Greek and Latin writers. About this period he wrote "the Maſque of Comus," which was preſented at Ludlow, then the reſidence of the Lord Preſident of Wales, in 1634, and had the honour of being acted by the Earl of Bridgewater's ſons and daughter. His next production was "Lycidas," an elegy, written in 1637; and ſoon after, it is ſuppoſed, he wrote his "Arcadia."

In 1638, his mother juſt dead, he left England, and went firſt to Paris. From thence he haſted to Italy, and ſtaid two months at Florence, where he was much noticed. At Rome, as at Florence, he ſtaid only two months, a time, as Johnſon expreſſes it, "too ſhort for the contemplation of learning, policy, or manners." From Rome he paſſed on to Naples; but inſtead of extending his travels, as he intended, he reſolved to haſten home, hearing of the differences between the king and parliament, and being informed of plots laid againſt him by the Jeſuits, for the liberty of his converſation on religion. He came back to Rome, and ſtaid there two months more, and afterwards went to Florence without moleſtation.

From Florence he viſited Lucca, Venice, and Geneva, and came home through France, after an abſence of a year and three months.

He firſt hired a lodging at the houſe of one Ruſſel, a taylor, in St. Bride's Church Yard, and undertook the education of John and Edmund Phillips, his ſiſter's ſons. Finding his rooms too little, he took a garden-houſe in Alderſgate Street. Here he received more boys to be boarded and inſtructed; for his allowance from his

his father not being ample, he thus ſupplied his deficiencies by an honeſt and uſeful employment; and it is ſaid, that in the art of education he performed wonders.

He now began to engage in the controverſies of the times. In 1641 he publiſhed a treatiſe on Reformation, in two books, againſt the eſtabliſhed church, and alſo another reſpecting epiſcopacy. His next work was "The Reaſon of Church Government urged againſt Prelacy, by Mr. John Milton, 1642. He publiſhed the ſame year two more pamphlets upon the ſame queſtion."

His father, after Reading was taken by Eſſex, came to reſide in his houſe, and his ſchool increaſed. At Whitſuntide, in his thirty-fifth year, he married Mary, the daughter of Mr. Powell, a juſtice of the peace in Oxfordſhire. He brought her to town with him, where, however, ſhe did not remain above a month, before ſhe requeſted to return to her friends, which was granted, upon a promiſe of her coming back at Michaelmas. This, however, when the time came, ſhe had no inclination to do; and, after ſome vain attempts to make her comply, Milton ſoon determined to repudiate her for diſobedience. The lady and her relations now found that he was not an unreſiſting ſufferer of injuries, and therefore reſolved to endeavour a re-union, which was firſt effected in the houſe of one Blackborough, his relation, in the lane of St. Martin's-le-Grand, where at one of his uſual viſits he was ſurpriſed to ſee his wife come from another room, and implore forgiveneſs on her knees. He reſiſted her intreaties for a while, but by the interceſſion of friends, on both ſides, a reconciliation ſoon took place. It were injurious to omit, that Milton afterwards received her father and her brothers in his own houſe, when they were diſtreſſed with other royaliſts.

He publiſhed about the ſame time his "Areopagitica, a ſpeech of Mr. John Milton for the liberty of unlicenſed printing;"

printing;" and not long after, in the year 1645, a collection of his Latin and Engliſh poems appeared, in which the "Allegro and Penſeroſo," with ſome others, were publiſhed.

He had taken a large houſe in Barbican for the reception of ſcholars, but finding there was no great increaſe to his number, about the time the army was new modelled (1645) he removed to a ſmaller one in Holborn, which opened backward into Lincoln's-Inn Fields. He is not known to have publiſhed any thing afterwards till the king's death, when, finding his murderers condemned by the preſbyterians, he wrote a treatiſe to juſtify it. He made "Some Remarks on the Articles of Peace between Ormond and the Iriſh Rebels," and was ſuſpected of having interpolated the book called *Icon Baſilikè*, which the council of ſtate, to whom he was now made Latin ſecretary, employed him to cenſure, by inſerting a prayer taken from "Sidney's Arcadia," and imputing it to the king. Dr. Birch was inclined to think that the regicides were the forgers of it.

Charles II. being now ſheltered in Holland, employed Salmaſius, profeſſor of polite learning at Leyden, to write a defence of his father and of monarchy, and Milton was required to pen a ſufficient anſwer, which he performed (1651) in ſuch a manner, that Hobbes declared himſelf unable to decide whoſe language was beſt, or whoſe arguments were worſt. Milton, when he undertook this anſwer, was weak of body, and dim of ſight; but his will was forward, and what was wanted in health was ſupplied by zeal. He was rewarded with a thouſand pounds, and his book was much read. This ſucceſs is ſaid to have ſhortened Salmaſius's life, for he died at the Spa, September 3, 1653.

Milton had now been blind for ſome time, but his vigour of intellect was ſuch, that he was ſtill able to diſcharge his office. After continuing his controverſies

verſies for ſome time, he at laſt gave himſelf up to his private ſtudies, and his civil employment.

Being now forty-ſeven years old, and ſeeing himſelf diſencumbered from external interruption, he planned three great works for his future employment---An Epic Poem, the Hiſtory of his Country, and a Dictionary of the Latin tongue. The latter was left in a very imperfect ſtate at his death, and the hiſtory ſtopped at the Conqueſt.

For the ſubject of his epic poem, after much deliberation, *long chuſing and beginning late*, he fixed upon "Paradiſe Loſt." It ſeems, by ſome ſketches of poetical projects left in manuſcript, and to be ſeen at a library at Cambridge, that he had digeſted his thoughts on this ſubject into one of thoſe wild dramas which were anciently called myſteries; and Philips has ſeen what he terms part of a tragedy, beginning with the firſt ten lines of Satan's addreſs to the Sun. They were, however, very imperfect rudiments of "Paradiſe Loſt."

While his greater deſigns were advancing, he amuſed himſelf, as well as he could, with little productions. He ſent to the preſs (1658) a manuſcript of Raleigh called "the Cabinet Council;" and next year gratified his malevolence to the clergy by a "Treatiſe of Civil Power in Eccleſiaſtical Caſes; and the Means of removing Hirelings out of the Church."

Oliver Cromwell was now dead; Richard, his ſon, was conſtrained to reſign, and Milton ſaw himſelf and his cauſe in equal danger. The king was evidently approaching with the irreſiſtible approbation of the people. Milton was therefore no longer ſecretary, and was conſequently obliged to quit the houſe which he held by his office, and thought it convenient to ſeek ſome ſhelter by hiding himſelf for a time in Bartholomew Cloſe, by Weſt Smithfield.

The king promiſed to admit into an act of oblivion all, except thoſe whom the parliament would object to;

and the parliament doomed none to capital puniſhment but thoſe who had immediately co-operated in the murder of the king. Milton was certainly not one of them; he had only juſtified what they had done. The publication of the Act of Oblivion put him in the ſame condition with his fellow-ſubjects.

He removed to Jewin-ſtreet, near Alderſgate-ſtreet; and being blind, and by no means wealthy, he wanted a domeſtick companion and attendant; and therefore, by the recommendation of Dr. Paget, married Elizabeth Minſhul, of a gentleman's family in Cheſhire, probably without a fortune.

From this time he devoted himſelf entirely to poetry and literature, and after publiſhing the year following, (1661) "Accidence commenced Grammar," for the uſe of Children, although he was then writing "Paradiſe Loſt," he took a houſe in the *Artillery-walk*, leading to *Bunhill-fields*, the mention of which concludes the regiſter of Milton's removals and habitation.

He was now buſied by "Paradiſe Loſt," which it is ſuppoſed was reduced to its preſent form about the time (1655) when he finiſhed his diſpute with the defenders of the king. He long before had promiſed to adorn his native country by ſome great performance; but while he was obliged to divide his time between his private ſtudies, and affairs of ſtate, his poetical labour muſt have been often interrupted.

Being driven from all public ſtations, he was confeſſedly and viſibly employed upon his poem.—He was obliged, when he had compoſed as many lines as his memory would conveniently retain, to employ ſome friend in writing them. This gave opportunity to obſervations and reports.

Philips, who went from time to time to viſit him, and had the peruſal of the poem as it went on, aſked the reaſon, as the ſummer came on, of his not being ſhewn any for a conſiderable time.—Milton declared

" that

" that his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinox to the vernal."

Richardſon relates, " that he would ſometimes be awake whole nights, but not a verſe could he make; and on a ſudden his poetical faculty would ruſh upon him with an *impetus* or *æſtrum*, and his daughter was immediately called to ſecure what came. At other times he would dictate perhaps forty lines in a breath, and then reduce them to half the number."—" That Milton called for his daughter (ſays Johnſon) *to ſecure what came*, may be queſtioned; for unluckily it happens to be known, that his daughters were never taught to write."

Milton has told us, that he compoſed much of his poem in the night and morning, and that he poured out with great fluency his *unpremeditated verſe*. At what particular times of his life the ſeveral parts of his work were written, cannot now be known. The beginning of the third book ſhews that he had loſt his ſight; and the introduction to the ſeventh, that the return of the king had clouded him with diſcountenance, and that he was offended by the licentious feſtivity of the Reſtoration. There are no other internal notes of time.

When the plague (1665) raged in London, he took refuge at Chalfont, in Eſſex; where Elwood, who had taken the houſe for him, firſt ſaw a complete copy of " Paradiſe Loſt," and having peruſed it, ſaid to him, " Thou haſt ſaid a great deal upon ' Paradiſe Loſt;' what haſt thou to ſay upon *Paradiſe Found?*"

Next year, when the danger of infection had ceaſed, he returned to Bunhill Fields, and deſigned the publication of his poem. A licenſe was granted, though objections were made to particular paſſages, and among them, to the ſimile of the ſun eclipſed in the firſt book. He ſold his copy, April 27, 1667, to Samuel Simmons, for an immediate payment of five pounds, with a ſtipulation to receive five pounds more when 1300 ſhould

be ſold of the firſt edition; and again five pounds after the ſale of the ſame number of the ſecond edition, and another five pounds after the ſame ſale of the third. None of the three editions were to be extended beyond fifteen hundred copies.

The firſt edition was of ten books, in a ſmall quarto. The titles were varied from year to year; and an advertiſement and the arguments of the books were omitted in ſome copies, and inſerted in others.

The ſale gave him in two years a right to his ſecond payment, for which the receipt was ſigned April 26, 1669. The ſecond edition was not given till 1674; it was printed in ſmall octavo; and the number of books was increaſed to twelve, by a diviſion of the ſeventh and tenth; and ſome other ſmall improvements were made. The third edition was publiſhed in 1678; and the widow, to whom the copy was then to devolve, ſold all her claims to Simmons for eight pounds, according to her receipt given Dec. 21, 1680. Simmons had already agreed to transfer the whole right to Brabazon Aylmer, for twenty-five pounds; and Aylmer ſold to Jacob Tonſon half, Auguſt 17, 1683, and half March 24, 1690, at a price conſiderably enlarged.

The ſlow ſale and tardy reputation of this poem have been always mentioned as evidences of neglected merit; but Dr. Johnſon appears to think, conſidering the ſtate of literature of that time, reading not being then a general amuſement as it is at preſent, that the ſale of thirteen hundred copies in two years, was an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius.

Three years after his "Paradiſe Loſt," (1670) he publiſhed his "Hiſtory of England," compriſing the whole fable of Geoffry of Monmouth, and continued to the Norman invaſion. The ſame year were printed "Paradiſe Regained," and "Samſon Agoniſtes," a tragedy, written in imitation of the ancients, and never deſigned by the author for the ſtage.

When

When Milton ſhewed "Paradiſe Regained" to Elwood, "This," ſaid he, "is owing to you; for you put it in my head by the queſtion you put to me at Chalfont, which otherwiſe I had not thought of."

His laſt poetical offspring was his favourite. He could not, as Elwood relates, endure to hear "Paradiſe Loſt" preferred to "Paradiſe Regained."

He now compoſed a book of logic, for the initiation of ſtudents in philoſophy; and publiſhed (1672) "Artis Logicæ plenior inſtitutio ad Petri Rami methodum concinnata: that is, A new Scheme of Logic, according to the Method of Ramus." He alſo publiſhed "A Treatiſe of True Religion, Hereſy, Schiſm, Toleration, and the Beſt Means to prevent the Growth of Popery."

In the laſt years of his life he reprinted his juvenile poems, and ſent to the preſs a collection of familiar epiſtles in Latin. When he had attained his 66th year, the gout, with which he had been long tormented, prevailed over the enfeebled powers of nature, and he died, by a quiet and ſilent expiration, about the 10th of November 1674, at his houſe in Bunhill-fields; and was buried next his father in the chancel of St. Giles's at Cripplegate, his funeral being very ſplendidly and numerouſly attended. A monument has been erected in Weſtminſter Abbey "to the author of Paradiſe Loſt," by Mr. Benſon.

"Milton has the reputation of having been in his youth eminently beautiful, ſo as to have been called the lady of his college. His hair, which was of light brown, parted at the fore-top, and hung down upon his ſhoulders, according to the picture which he has given of Adam. He was however not of the heroic ſtature, but rather below the middle ſize, according to Mr. Richardſon, who mentions him as having narrowly eſcaped from being *ſhort* and *thick*. He was vigorous and active, and delighted in the exerciſe of the ſword, in which he is related to have been eminently ſkilful. His weapon was, I believe, not the rapier, but

the back-ſword, of which he recommends the uſe in his book on Education.

" His eyes are ſaid never to have been bright; but if he was a dextrous fencer, they muſt have been once quick.

" His literature was unqueſtionably great. He read all the languages, which are conſidered either as learned or polite; Hebrew, with its two dialects, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spaniſh. In Latin his ſkill was ſuch as places him in the firſt rank of writers and critics; and he appears to have cultivated Italian with uncommon diligence. The books in which his daughter, who uſed to read to him, repreſented him as moſt delighting, after Homer, which he could almoſt repeat, were " Ovid's Metamorphoſes," and " Euripides."

" Of the Engliſh poets he ſet moſt value upon Spenſer, Shakeſpeare, and Cowley. Spenſer was apparently his favourite. Shakeſpeare he may eaſily be ſuppoſed to like, with every other ſkilful reader; but I ſhould not have expected that Cowley, whoſe ideas of excellence were ſo different from his own, would have had much of his approbation. His character of Dryden, who ſometimes viſited him, was, that he was a good rhymiſt, but no poet."

Dr. Johnſon condemns his theological opinions, and ſays, " that we know rather what he was not, than what he was. He was not of the church of Rome; he was not of the church of England." His political notions were thoſe of an acrimonious and ſurly republican.

Of his juvenile performances Dr. Johnſon places the " Maſque of Comus," as the firſt in merit. Our limits will not permit us to inſert his criticiſms on the whole of the productions of the poet before us.—We ſhall therefore come immediately to what he ſays of Milton's grand work, " Paradiſe Loſt"—and even here, the great extent to which his minute inveſtigation

of

of this poem leads him, neceſſarily confines us to a few of the moſt ſtriking and important paſſages, ſuch as we think will ſuffice to give the reader a juſt inſight into the general opinion which the critic entertains of the production in the aggregate.

" With reſpect to deſign (ſays he) it may claim the firſt place, and with reſpect to performance the ſecond, among the productions of the human mind.

" The characteriſtic quality of his poem is ſublimity. He ſometimes deſcends to the elegant, but his element is the great. He can occaſionally inveſt himſelf with grace; but his natural port is gigantic loftineſs. He can pleaſe when pleaſure is required; but it is his peculiar power to aſtoniſh.

" He ſeems to be well acquainted with his own genius, and to know what it was that Nature had beſtowed upon him more bountifully than upon others; the power of diſplaying the vaſt, illuminating the ſplendid, enforcing the awful, darkening the gloomy, and aggravating the dreadful. He therefore choſe a ſubject on which too much could not be ſaid, on which he might tire his fancy without the cenſure of extravagance.

" The appearances of nature, and the occurrences of life did not ſatiate his appetite of greatneſs. To paint things as they are, requires a minute attention, and employs the memory more than the fancy. Milton's delight was to ſport in the wide regions of poſſibility; reality was a ſcene too narrow for his mind. He ſent his faculties out upon diſcovery, into worlds where only imagination can travel, and delighted to form new modes of exiſtence, and furniſh ſentiment and action to ſuperior beings, to trace the counſels of hell, or accompany the choirs of heaven.

" But he could not always be in other worlds: he muſt ſometimes reviſit earth, and tell of things viſible and known. When he cannot raiſe wonder by the ſublimity of his mind, he gives delight by its fertility.

"Whatever be his ſubject, he never fails to fill the imagination. But his images and deſcriptions of the ſcenes or operations of nature do not ſeem to be always copied from original forms, nor to have the freſhneſs, racineſs, and energy of immediate obſervations. He ſaw Nature, as Dryden expreſſes it, *through the ſpectacles of books*: and on moſt occaſions calls learning to his aſſiſtance. The garden of Eden brings to his mind the vale of *Enna*, where Proſerpine was gathering flowers. Satan makes his way through fighting elements, like *Argo* between the *Cyanean* rocks, or *Ulyſſes* between the two *Sicilian* whirlpools, when he ſhunned *Charybdis* on the *larboard*. The mythological alluſions have been juſtly cenſured, as not being always uſed with notice of their vanity, but they contribute variety to the narration, and produce an alternate exercife of the memory and the fancy.

"His ſimilies are leſs numerous, and more various, than thoſe of his predeceſſors. But he does not confine himſelf within the limits of rigorous compariſon: his great excellence is amplitude, and he expands the adventitious image beyond the dimenſions which the occaſion required. Thus, comparing the ſhield of Satan to the orb of the moon, he crowds the imagination with the diſcovery of the teleſcope, and all the wonders which the teleſcope diſcovers."

"Whatever be done, however, the poet is always great. Our progenitors, in their firſt ſtate, converſed with angels; even when folly and ſin had degraded them, they had not in their humiliation *the port of mean ſuitors*; and they riſe again to reverential regard, when we find that their prayers were heard.

"As human paſſions did not enter the world before the fall, there is in the "Paradiſe Loſt" little opportunity for the pathetic; but what little there is has not been loſt. That paſſion which is peculiar to rational nature, the anguiſh ariſing from the conſciouſneſs of tranſgreſſion, and the horrors attending the ſenſe of the divine

divine diſpleaſure, are very juſtly deſcribed, and forcibly impreſſed. But the paſſions are moved only on one occaſion; ſublimity is the general and prevailing quality in this poem; ſublimity variouſly modified, ſometimes deſcriptive, ſometimes argumentative.

" The defects and faults of " Paradiſe Loſt," for faults and defects every work of man muſt have, it is the buſineſs of impartial criticiſm to diſcover. As, in diſplaying the excellence of Milton, I have not made long quotations, becauſe of ſelecting beauties there had been no end, I ſhall in the ſame general manner mention that which ſeems to deſerve cenſure; for what Engliſhman can take delight in tranſcribing paſſages, which, if they leſſen the reputation of Milton, diminiſh in ſome degree the honour of our country?"

Diſclaiming all intention of noticing often verbal inaccuracies, Dr. Johnſon thus proceeds:—

" The plan of " Paradiſe Loſt" has this inconvenience, that it compriſes neither human actions, nor human manners. The man and woman who act and ſuffer, are in a ſtate which no other man or woman can ever know. The reader finds no tranſaction in which he can be engaged; beholds no condition in which he can by any effort of imagination place himſelf; he has, therefore, little natural curioſity or ſympathy."

In the Poem itſelf, there is " a full diſplay of the united force of ſtudy and genius; of a great accumulation of materials, with judgement to digeſt, and fancy to combine them: Milton was able to ſelect from nature, or from ſtory, from ancient fable, or from modern ſcience, whatever could illuſtrate or adorn his thoughts. An accumulation of knowledge impregnated his mind, fermented by ſtudy, and ſublimed by imagination.

" It has been therefore ſaid, without an indecent hyperbole, by one of his encomiaſts, that in reading " Paradiſe Loſt" we read a book of univerſal knowledge.

" But original deficience cannot be ſupplied. The want of human intereſt is always felt. " Paradiſe Loſt" is one of the books which the reader admires and lays down, and forgets to take up again. Its peruſal is a duty rather than a pleaſure. We read Milton for inſtruction, retire harraſſed and overburdened, and look elſewhere for recreation; we deſert our maſter, and ſeek for companions."

Another inconvenience of Milton's deſign is, *that it requires the deſcription of what cannot be deſcribed, the agency of ſpirits*, and proves, in a variety of inſtances, *that the confuſion of ſpirit and matter which pervades the whole narration of the war of heaven, fills it with incongruity.*

" Milton's Allegory of Sin and Death is undoubtedly faulty. Sin is indeed the mother of death, and may be allowed to be the portreſs of hell; but when they ſtop the journey of Satan, a journey deſcribed as real, and when death offers him battle, the Allegory is broken. That ſin and death ſhould have ſhewn the way to hell might have been allowed, but they cannot facilitate the paſſage by building a bridge, becauſe the difficulty of Satan's paſſage is deſcribed as real and ſenſible, and the bridge ought to be only figurative. The hell aſſigned to the rebellious ſpirits is deſcribed as not leſs local than the reſidence of man. It is placed in ſome diſtant part of ſpace ſeparated from the regions of harmony and order by a chaotick waſte and an unoccupied vacuity; but *ſin* and *death* worked up a *mole* of *aggregated ſoil*, cemented with *aſphaltus*, a work too bulky for ideal architects.

" This unſkilful Allegory appears to me one of the greateſt faults of the poem; and to this there was no temptation, but the author's opinion of its beauty."

After pointing out ſome objections to the conduct of the narrative, the critic cloſes his examination of " Paradiſe Loſt" in theſe words:

" Such

" Such are the faults of that wonderful performance " Paradiſe Loſt;" which he who can put in balance with its beauties muſt be conſidered not as nice but as dull, as leſs to be cenſured for want of candour than pitied for want of ſenſibility."

Of " Paradiſe Regained," and " Samſon Agoniſtes," ---the firſt (ſays Johnſon) has been too much depreciated, the latter too much admired.---The whole criticiſm finiſhes with the following admirable paſſage:

" The higheſt praiſe of genius is original invention. Milton cannot be ſaid to have contrived the ſtructure of an Epick poem, and therefore muſt yield to that vigour and amplitude of mind to which all generations muſt be indebted for the art of poetical narration, for the texture of the fable, the variation of incident, the interpoſition of dialogue, and all the ſtratagems that ſurpriſe and enchain attention. But of all the borrowers from Homer, Milton is perhaps the leaſt indebted. He was naturally a thinker for himſelf, confident of his own abilities, and diſdainful of help or hindrance; he did not refuſe admiſſion to the thoughts or images of his predeceſſors, but he did not ſeek them. From his contemporaries he neither courted nor received ſupport; there is in his writings nothing by which the pride of other authors might be gratified, or favours gained; no exchange of praiſe, nor ſolicitation of ſupport. His great works were performed under diſcountenance, and in blindneſs; but difficulties vaniſhed at his touch; he was born for whatever is arduous, and his work is not the greateſt of heroic poems, only becauſe it is not the firſt."

BUTLER.

THE only accounts we have of the great author of Hudibras are all of diſputable authority.

Samuel Butler was born in the pariſh of Strenſham in Worceſterſhire, according to his biographer, an unknown writer, in 1612; but Mr. Longueville, the ſon of Butler's principal friend, informed the author of the "General Dictionary," that he was born in 1600.

His father's condition is variouſly repreſented—One mentions him as competently wealthy; another ſays he was an honeſt farmer with ſome ſmall eſtate, who made a ſhift to educate his ſon at the grammar ſchool of Worceſter, under Mr. Henry Bright, from whoſe care he removed for a ſhort time to Cambridge; but, for want of money, was never made a member of any college. The accounts are ſo very doubtful reſpecting him, that it is not certain whether he went to Cambridge or Oxford.

He was for ſome time, if we credit the author of his life, clerk to Mr. Jefferys, of Earl's Croomb in Worceſterſhire, an eminent juſtice of the peace. In his ſervice he had not only leiſure for ſtudy, but for recreation: his amuſements were muſick and painting; and the reward of his pencil was the friendſhip of the celebrated Cooper.

He was afterwards admitted into the family of the Counteſs of Kent, where he had the uſe of a library; and ſo much recommended himſelf to Selden, ſteward to the Counteſs, that he was often employed by him in literary buſineſs. How long he continued in it, and why he left it, are, like the other incidents of his life, utterly unknown.

The

The viciſſitudes of his condition placed him afterwards in the family of Sir Samuel Luke, one of Cromwell's officers, and he is ſaid to have written or begun his poem at this time.

When the king returned, the time came in which loyalty hoped for its reward. Butler, however, was only made Secretary to the Earl of Carbury, Preſident of the Principality of Wales; who conferred on him the ſtewardſhip of Ludlow Caſtle, when the court of the Marches was revived.

In this part of his life he married Mrs. Herbert, a gentlewoman of a good family; and lived, it is ſaid, upon her fortune, having ſtudied the common law, but never practiſed it. Her fortune, his biographer ſays, was loſt by bad ſecurities.

In 1663 was publiſhed the firſt part, containing three cantos of the poem of Hudibras, which, as Prior relates, was made known at court by the taſte and influence of the Earl of Dorſet. When it was known, it was neceſſarily admired by all, and by no one more than by the king.

In 1664* the ſecond part appeared; and the writer was again praiſed. But praiſe was his whole reward. Places and employments of value and credit were promiſed him, but no ſuch advantages did he ever obtain. There is a report, unſubſtantiated by proof, that the king once gave him three hundred guineas.

It is related, that he was ſecretary to Villiers Duke of Buckingham, when he was Chancellor of Cambridge, but this is alſo doubted. One thing however is generally allowed, that however well Butler had deſerved

* This muſt be a miſtake of Dr. Johnſon's: for in the "Mercurius Publicus" for Nov. 20, 1663, is this very ſingular advertiſement; "Newly publiſhed, The Second Part of Hudibras, by the Author of the Former, which (if poſſible) has outdone the Firſt. Sold by John Martin and James Allestry, at the Bell, St. Paul's Church Yard." EDITOR.

of

of the royal family, by writing his inimitable Hudibras, he was at laſt ſuffered (a reproach to the court) to languiſh in obſcurity in the greateſt diſtreſs. Notwithſtanding, however, the diſcouragement and neglect he met with, he publiſhed in 1678 the third part, which ſtill leaves the poem imperfect and abrupt. It cannot be thought ſtrange that he ſhould ſtop here, however unexpectedly; for to write is ſufficiently unpleaſing, and, if his birth be placed right by Mr. Longueville, he had now arrived at an age when he might well think it proper to be in jeſt no longer.

He died in 1680, and Mr. Longueville buried him at his own coſt in the church-yard of Covent Garden. About ſixty years afterwards, Mr. Barber, a printer, and Lord Mayor of London, beſtowed on him a monument in Weſtminſter Abbey.

After his death were publiſhed three ſmall volumes of his Poſthumous works: and two volumes more have been printed by Mr. Thyer of Mancheſter, indubitably genuine.

"The poem of Hudibras (ſays Dr. Johnſon) is one of thoſe compoſitions of which a nation may juſtly boaſt; as the images which it exhibits are domeſtick, the ſentiments unborrowed and unexpected, and the ſtrain of diction original and peculiar. We muſt not, however, ſuffer the pride which we aſſume as the countrymen of Butler to make any encroachment upon juſtice, nor appropriate thoſe honours which others have a right to ſhare. The poem of Hudibras is not wholly Engliſh; the original idea is to be found in the hiſtory of Don Quixote; a book to which a mind of the greateſt power may be indebted without diſgrace." "But," adds the critic,

"If unexhauſtible wit could give perpetual pleaſure, no eye would ever leave half-read the work of Butler; for what poet has ever brought ſo many remote images ſo happily together? It is ſcarcely poſ-

ſible

ſible to peruſe a page without finding ſome aſſociation of images that was never found before. By the firſt paragraph the reader is amuſed, by the next he is delighted, and by a few more ſtrained to aſtoniſhment; but aſtoniſhment is a toilſome pleaſure: he is ſoon weary of wondering, and longs to be diverted.

" Imagination is uſeleſs without knowledge: nature gives in vain the power of combination, unleſs ſtudy and obſervation ſupply materials to be combined. Butler's treaſures of knowledge appear proportioned to his expence: whatever topick employs his mind, he ſhews himſelf qualified to expand and illuſtrate it with all the acceſſories that books can furniſh: he is found not only to have travelled the beaten road, but the bye walks of literature; not only to have taken the general ſurvey, but to have examined particulars with minute inſpection.

" If the French boaſt the learning of Rabelais, we need not be afraid of confronting them with Butler."

Dr. Johnſon, among other obſervations, ſays, that Hudibras was not a haſty effuſion; and adds, that *to accumulate ſuch a maſs of ſentiments at the call of accidental deſire or of ſudden neceſſity, is beyond the reach and power of the moſt active and comprehenſive mind.* The manners of Hudibras, however, being founded on opinions, are temporary and local, and therefore become every day leſs intelligible and leſs ſtriking.

" The diction of this poem," ſays the great critic, " is groſsly familiar, and the numbers purpoſely neglected, except in a few places where the thoughts by their native excellence ſecure themſelves from violation, being ſuch as mean language cannot expreſs. The mode of verſification has been blamed by Dryden, who regrets that the heroick meaſure was not rather choſen. To the critical ſentence of Dryden the higheſt reverence would be due, were not his deciſions often precipitate,

precipitate, and his opinions immature. When he wiſhed to change the meaſure, he probably would have been willing to change more. If he intended, that when the numbers were heroick the diction ſhould ſtill remain vulgar, he planned a very heterogeneous and unnatural compoſition. If he preferred a general ſtateline's both of ſound and words, he can be only underſtood to wiſh that Butler had undertaken a different work."

DRYDEN.

NOTHING can be known of this great poet beyond what caſual mention and uncertain tradition have ſupplied. John Dryden was born Auguſt 9, 1631, at Aldwincle near Oundle, the ſon of Eraſmus Dryden of Tichmarſh; who was the third ſon of Sir Eraſmus Dryden, baronet, of Canons Aſhby. All theſe places are in Northamptonſhire; but the original ſtock of the family was in the county of Huntingdon.

He is reported by his laſt biographer, Derrick, to have inherited from his father an eſtate of 200l. a year, but Johnſon ſeems inclined to believe that Derrick was miſinformed.

From Weſtminſter ſchool, where he was inſtructed as one of the king's ſcholars by Dr. Buſby, he was in 1650 elected to one of the Weſtminſter ſcholarſhips at Cambridge.

Of his ſchool performances, there has appeared only a poem on the death of Lord Haſtings; and at the Univerſity he does not appear to have been eager of poetical diſtinction. He obtained, whatever was the reaſon, no fellowſhip in the college.

It

It was not till the death of Cromwell, in 1658, that he became a publick candidate for fame, by publiſhing *Heroick Stanzas on the late Lord Protector*; which, compared with the verſes of Sprat and Waller on the ſame occaſion, were ſufficient to raiſe great expectations of the riſing poet.

Dryden, like the other panegyriſts of uſurpation, changed his opinion, or his profeſſion, when the king was reſtored, and publiſhed "ASTREA REDUX," *a poem on the happy reſtoration and return of his moſt ſacred Majeſty King Charles the Second.*

According to the beſt information that can be obtained, in the thirty-ſecond year of his life (1663) he commenced a writer for the ſtage. His firſt piece was a comedy called the "Wild Gallant;" but it was ſo much diſapproved, that he was compelled to recal it, and change it from its imperfect ſtate to the form in which it now appears. In 1664, he publiſhed the "Rival Ladies," which he dedicated to the Earl of Orrery. In this play he made his eſſay of dramatick rhyme. He then joined with Sir Robert Howard in the "Indian Queen," a tragedy in rhyme. The "Indian Emperor" was publiſhed in 1667, and is alſo written in rhyme, intended for a ſequel to Howard's "Indian Queen." In this play is the deſcription of night which *Rymer* has made famous by preferring it to thoſe of all other poets.

In 1667 he publiſhed "Annus Mirabilis," the *year of wonders*, which ſeems to be one of his moſt elaborate works. It is written in quatrains, or heroick ſtanzas of four lines. His "Dialogue on Dramatick Poetry" appeared in 1668, in which year he ſucceeded Sir William Davenant as Poet Laureat. "Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen," a tragi-comedy, "Sir Martin Marall," a comedy, and "The Tempeſt," an alteration, in conjunction with Davenant, of Shakeſpeare's play, made their appearance ſucceſſively.

About

About the year 1673, after ſeverely attacking a ſucceſsful play by *Elkanah Settle**, appeared the "Mock Aſtrologer," a comedy, "Tyrannic Love, or the Virgin Martyr," a tragedy, in rhyme, and the two parts of the "Conqueſt of Grenada." Then came "Marriage Alamode," "The Aſſignation, or Love in a Nunnery," comedies, and "Amboyna." The remainder in the following order: "Troilus and Creſſida," altered from Shakeſpeare, the "Spaniſh Fryar," a tragi-comedy, The "Duke of Guiſe," a tragedy written in conjunction with Lee, together with "Œdipus," "Albion and Albanius," a muſical drama, The "State of Innocence and Fall of Man," called by the author an opera, but by Johnſon a *tragedy in heroick rhyme*, "Aureng Zebe," a tragedy in rhyme, and which appears to be the moſt elaborate of all his dramas, "All for Love, or the World well Loſt," a tragedy. This play is by univerſal conſent accounted the work in which he has admitted the feweſt impropriеties of ſtyle or character. "Limberham, or the Kind Keeper," a comedy, which after the third night was prohibited as too indecent for the ſtage. "Don Sebaſtian," eſteemed either the firſt or ſecond of his dramatick performances. It was firſt acted in 1690, after Dryden had for ſome years diſcontinued writing for the ſtage. "Amphytrion" a comedy, and "Cleomenes," a tragedy. It is related in the "Guardian," that as Dryden came out from the repreſentation of the laſt play, he was accoſted thus by ſome airy ſtripling: *Had I been left alone with a young beauty, I would not have ſpent my time like your Spartan: That, Sir*, ſaid Dryden, *perhaps is true; but give me leave to tell you, that you are no hero*. After "King Arthur," an opera, appeared "Love Triumphant," a tragi-comedy in 1694, his laſt drama. In his dedication to the Earl of

* The Empreſs of Morocco, a tragedy.

Saliſbury,

Saliſbury, he mentions *the lowneſs of fortune to which he has voluntarily reduced himſelf, and of which he has no reaſon to be aſhamed.*

Although author of ſuch a number of theatrical pieces, this *lowneſs of fortune* of which he complains, is not ſo ſurpriſing, upon conſideration, as it may firſt appear. The profits of the theatre at that time, when many claſſes of the people were deducted from the audience, were not great; and the poet had for a long time but a ſingle night. The firſt that had two nights was *Southern*, and the firſt that had three was *Rowe*. A play ſeldom produced him more than a hundred pounds by the accumulated gains of the third night, the dedication, and the copy.

His prologues had ſuch reputation, that for ſome time a play was conſidered as leſs likely to be well received, if ſome of his verſes did not introduce it. The price of a prologue was two guineas, till being aſked to write one for Mr. *Southern*, he demanded three; *not*, ſaid he, *young man, out of diſreſpect to you, but the players have had my goods too cheap.*

Though his own opinion was, that his genius was not dramatic, he had a great confidence in his own fertility; for he is ſaid to have engaged, by contract, to furniſh four plays in a year.

In the year 1671, Buckingham characteriſed him by the name of *Bayes* in the *Rehearſal*, and the Earl of Rocheſter, to ſuppreſs his reputation, took Settle into his protection. However, neither critics nor rivals did Dryden much miſchief, unleſs it was that they gained from his own temper the power of vexing him, which his frequent burſts of reſentment give reaſon to ſuſpect. The perpetual accuſation produced againſt him was that of plagiariſm, againſt which he never attempted any vigorous defence.

During the ſpace of time he produced ſuch a number of plays, it may be ſuppoſed he was ſufficiently employed;

employed; but notwithſtanding he found room for many other undertakings. He contributed ſomething to many publications, and in 1680, the Epiſtles of Ovid being tranſlated by the poets of the time, Dryden materially aſſiſted the work.

The following year he became yet more conſpicuous by uniting politics with poetry in the memorable ſatire called "Abſalom and Achitophel," written againſt the faction which, by Lord Shafteſbury's incitement, ſet the Duke of Monmouth at its head. Johnſon ſays, that the ſale of this poem was ſo large, that his father, an old bookſeller, told him, he had not known it equalled but by *Sacheverel's* trial.---The "Model" came out in the ſame year.

Soon after the acceſſion of King James, when the deſign of reconciling the nation to the church of Rome became apparent, and the religion of the court gave the only efficacious title to its favours, Dryden declared himſelf a convert to popery. The prieſts, having ſtrengthened their cauſe by ſo powerful an adherent, employed him to tranſlate "Maimbourg's Hiſtory of the League," which he publiſhed with a large introduction. His name is likewiſe prefixed to the Engliſh life of Francis Xavier, and he is ſuppoſed to have undertaken to tranſlate "Varillas's Hiſtory of Hereſies."

Having probably felt his own inferiority in theological controverſy, he was deſirous of bringing poetry to aid his arguments, and he publiſhed the "Hind and Panther," a poem in which the church of Rome, figured by the *milk-white hind*, defends her tenets againſt the church of England, repreſented by the *Panther*, a beaſt beautiful, but ſpotted. This fable was ridiculed by Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax, and Prior, who then gave the firſt ſpecimen of his abilities.

When the Revolution took place, Dryden, a papiſt, could of courſe be no longer laureat, and Shadwell, an old

old enemy, was appointed to ſucceed him. He celebrated the intruder's inauguration in a poem, exquiſitely ſatirical, called "Mac Flecno," of which the Dunciad, as Pope himſelf declares, is an imitation.—Prior relates, that Lord Dorſet gave him an allowance equal to the ſalary.

Being now no longer the court poet, he was compelled to look back for ſupport to his former trade, that of writing for the ſtage, and it was at this time (1690) he produced "Don Sebaſtian." In 1693 appeared a new verſion of Juvenal and Perſius. Of Juvenal he tranſlated the firſt, third, ſixth, tenth, and ſixteenth, ſatires; and of Perſius the whole work. The 14th of Juvenal was the performance of John, and the ſeventh of Charles, ſons of Dryden.—He prefixed a very ample preface in the form of a dedication to Lord Dorſet, and there gives an account of the deſign which he had once formed to write an Epic poem on the actions either of Arthur or the Black Prince. This plan he charged Blackmore with ſtealing.

In 1694 he began the moſt laborious and difficult of all his works, the tranſlation of "Virgil;" from which he borrowed two months, that he might turn "Freſnoy's Art of Painting" into Engliſh proſe.—The preface, which he boaſts to have written in twelve mornings, exhibits a parallel of poetry and painting with a miſcellaneous collection of critical remarks, ſuch as coſt a mind like his no labour to produce them.

In 1697 he publiſhed his verſion of the works of "Virgil," and in 1699 his laſt work, his Fables, made their appearance, in conſequence, as is ſuppoſed, of a contract which obliged him, in conſideration of three hundred pounds, to finiſh for the preſs ten thouſand verſes. In this volume is compriſed the well-known ode on St. Cecilia's day.

The time was now at hand which was to put an end to all his ſchemes and labours. On the 1ſt of May, 1701,

1701, having been ſome time, as he tells us, a cripple, he died in Gerrard-ſtreet of a mortification in his limbs. He was buried among the poets in Weſtminſter Abbey, where he lay long without diſtinction, till the Duke of Buckinghamſhire gave him a tablet, inſcribed only with the name of DRYDEN.

He married the Lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the Earl of Berkſhire, with circumſtances, according to the ſatire imputed to Lord Somers, not very honourable to either party. By her he had three ſons, Charles, John, and Henry. Charles was uſher of the palace to Pope Clement the XI. and viſiting England in 1704, was drowned in an attempt to ſwim acroſs the Thames at Windſor. John was the author of a comedy called "The Huſband his own Cuckold." He is ſaid to have died at Rome. Henry entered into ſome religious order.

Of what Dr. Johnſon has related of the private life and domeſtic manners of Dryden, our limits reſtrict us to the following remarks on a ſhyneſs in converſation which has been ſaid to have characteriſed him.

"There are men whoſe powers operate only at leiſure and in retirement, and whoſe intellectual vigour deſerts them in converſation; whom merriment confuſes, and objection diſconcerts; whoſe baſhfulneſs reſtrains their exertions, and ſuffers them not to ſpeak till the time of ſpeaking is paſt, or whoſe attention to their own character makes them unwilling to utter at hazard what has not been conſidered and cannot be recalled.

"Of Dryden's ſluggiſhneſs in converſation it is in vain to ſearch or to gueſs the cauſe. He certainly wanted neither ſentiments, nor language; his intellectual treaſures were great, though they were locked up from his own uſe. *His thoughts*, when he wrote, *flowed upon him ſo faſt, that his only care was which to chuſe, and which to reject.* Such rapidity of compoſition naturally

turally promiſes a flow of talk, yet we muſt be content to believe what an enemy ſays of him, when he likewiſe ſays it of himſelf. But, whatever was his character as a companion, it appears that he lived in familiarity with the higheſt perſons of his time. It is related by Carte, of the Duke of Ormond, that he uſed often to paſs a night with Dryden, and thoſe with whom Dryden conſorted: who they were Carte has not told; but certainly the convivial table at which Ormond ſat was not ſurrounded with a plebeian ſociety. He was indeed reproached with boaſting of his familiarity with the great; and Horace will ſupport him in the opinion, that to pleaſe ſuperiors is not the loweſt kind of merit."

The Critique of Johnſon on the Works of Dryden thus commences:

"Dryden may be properly conſidered as the father of Engliſh criticiſm, as the writer who firſt taught us to determine upon principles the merit of compoſition. Of our former poets the greateſt dramatiſt wrote without rules, conducted through life and nature by a genius that rarely miſſed, and rarely deſerted him. Of the reſt, thoſe who knew the laws of propriety had neglected to teach them.

"Two Arts of Engliſh Poetry were written in the days of Elizabeth, by Webb and Puttenham, from which ſomething might be learned, and a few hints had been given by Jonſon and Cowley; but Dryden's "Eſſay on Dramatick Poetry" was the firſt regular treatiſe on the art of writing. He who, having formed his opinions in the preſent age of Engliſh literature, turns back to peruſe this dialogue, will not perhaps find much increaſe of knowledge, or much novelty of inſtruction; but he is to remember that critical principles were then in the hands of a few, who had gathered them partly from the Ancients, and partly from the Italians and French. The ſtructure of Dramatick

matick poems was not then generally underſtood. Audiences applauded by inſtinct, and poets perhaps often pleaſed by chance."

"The Dialogue on the Drama was one of his firſt eſſays of criticiſm, written when he was yet a timorous candidate for reputation, and therefore laboured with that diligence which he might allow himſelf ſomewhat to remit, when his name gave ſanction to his poſitions, and his awe of the public was abated, partly by cuſtom, and partly by ſucceſs. It will not be eaſy to find, in all the opulence of our language, a treatiſe ſo artfully variegated with ſucceſſive repreſentations of oppoſite probabilities, ſo enlivened with imagery, ſo brightened with illuſtrations. His portraits of the Engliſh Dramatiſts are wrought with great ſpirit and diligence. The account of Shakeſpeare may ſtand as a perpetual model of encomiaſtick criticiſm, exact without minuteneſs, and lofty without exaggeration.—The praiſe laviſhed by Longinus on the atteſtation of the heroes of Marathon by Demoſthenes, fades away before it. In a few lines it exhibited a character ſo extenſive in its comprehenſion, and ſo curious in its limitations, that nothing can be added, diminiſhed, or reformed; nor can the Editors and Admirers of Shakeſpeare, in all their emulation of reverence, boaſt of much more than of having diffuſed and paraphraſed this epitome of excellence, of having changed Dryden's gold for baſer metal, of lower value though of greater bulk."

"As to his learning (ſays Johnſon) it will be difficult to prove that Dryden ever made any great advances in literature. Having diſtinguiſhed himſelf at Weſtminſter under the tuition of Buſby, who advanced his ſcholars to a height of knowledge very rarely attained in Grammar-Schools, and reſided afterwards at Cambridge, it is not to be ſuppoſed that his ſkill in the ancient languages was deficient, compared with that of common

common ſtudents; but his ſcholaſtick acquiſitions ſeem not proportionate to his opportunities and abilities. He could not, like Milton or Cowley, have made his name illuſtrious merely by his learning. He mentions but few books, and thoſe ſuch as lie in the beaten track of regular ſtudy; from which if ever he departs, he is in danger of loſing himſelf in unknown regions.

"Criticiſm, either didactick or defenſive, occupies almoſt all his proſe, except thoſe pages which he had devoted to his patrons; but none of his prefaces were ever thought tedious. They have not the formality of a ſettled ſtyle, in which the firſt half of the ſentence betrays the other. The clauſes are never balanced, nor the periods modelled; every word ſeems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous; what is little, is gay; what is great, is ſplendid. He may be thought to mention himſelf too frequently; but while he forces himſelf upon our eſteem, we cannot refuſe him to ſtand high in his own. Every thing is excuſed by the play of images and the ſprightlineſs of expreſſion. Though all is eaſy, nothing is feeble; though all ſeems careleſs, there is nothing harſh; and though ſince his earlier works more than a century has paſſed they have nothing yet uncouth or obſolete.

"He who writes much, will not eaſily eſcape a manner, ſuch a recurrence of particular modes as may be eaſily noted. Dryden is always *another and the ſame*, he does not exhibit a ſecond time the ſame elegancies in the ſame form, nor appears to have any art other than that of expreſſing with clearneſs what he thinks with vigour. His ſtile could not eaſily be imitated, either ſeriouſly or ludicrouſly; for, being always equable and always varied, it has no prominent or diſcriminative characters. The beauty who is totally free from diſproportion of parts and features cannot be ridiculed by any over-charged reſemblance."

After ſeparately examining almoſt every article of Dryden's Works (in which proceſs it is not poſſible for us to follow him), Johnſon thus characteriſes the celebrated Ode for St. Cecilia's Day:

"The Ode for St. Cecilia's Day, perhaps the laſt effort of his poetry, has been always conſidered as exhibiting the higheſt flight of fancy, and the exacteſt nicety of art. This is allowed to ſtand without a rival. If indeed there is any excellence beyond it, in ſome other of Dryden's works that excellence muſt be found. Compared with the Ode on *Killigrew*, it may be pronounced perhaps ſuperior in the whole, but without any ſingle part equal to the firſt ſtanza of the other.

"It is ſaid to have coſt Dryden a fortnight's labour; but it does not want its negligences: ſome of the lines are without correſpondent rhymes; a defect, which I never detected but after an acquaintance of many years, and which the enthuſiaſm of the writer might hinder him from perceiving.

"His laſt ſtanza has leſs emotion than the former; but is not leſs elegant in the diction. The concluſion vitious; the muſick of Timotheus, which *raiſed a monarch to the ſkies*, had only a metaphorical power; that of *Cecilia*, which *drew an Angel down*, had a real effect: the crown therefore could not reaſonably be divided."

"In a general ſurvey of Dryden's labours, he appears to have had a mind very comprehenſive by nature, and much enriched with acquired knowledge. His compoſitions are the effects of a vigorous genius operating upon large materials.

"The power that predominated in his intellectual operations was rather ſtrong reaſon than quick ſenſibility. Upon all occaſions that were preſented, he ſtudied rather than felt, and produced ſentiments not ſuch as nature enforces, but meditation ſupplies. With the ſimple and elemental paſſions, as they ſpring ſeparate in the

the mind, he ſeems not much acquainted; and ſeldom deſcribes them but as they are complicated by the various relations of ſociety, and confuſed in the tumults and agitations of life.

"What he ſays of love may contribute to the explanation of his character:

"Love various minds does variouſly inſpire,
"It ſtirs in gentle boſoms gentle fire,
"Like that of incenſe on the altar laid;
"But raging flames tempeſtuous ſouls invade;
"A fire which every windy paſſion blows,
"With pride it mounts, or with revenge it glows.

"Dryden's was not one of the *gentle boſoms*: Love as it ſubſiſts in itſelf, with no tendency but to the perſon loved, and wiſhing only for correſpondent kindneſs, ſuch love as ſhuts out all other intereſt, the love of the golden age, was too ſoft and ſubtile to put his faculties in motion. He hardly conceived it but in its turbulent effervescence with ſome other deſires; when it was inflamed by rivalry or obſtructed by difficulties, when it invigorated ambition or exaſperated revenge.

"He is therefore, with all his variety of excellence, not often pathetick; and had ſo little ſenſibility of the power of effuſions purely natural, that he did not eſteem them in others. Simplicity gave him no pleaſure; and for the firſt part of his life he looked on *Otway* with contempt, though at laſt, indeed very late, he confeſſed that in his play *there* was *nature, which is the chief beauty*.

"We do not always know our own motives. I am not certain whether it was not rather the difficulty which he found in exhibiting the genuine operations of the heart, than a ſervile ſubmiſſion to an injudicious audience, that filled his plays with falſe magnificence. It was neceſſary to fix attention; and the mind can be

captivated only by recollection, or by curiosity; by reviving former thoughts or impressing new: sentences were readier at his call than images; he could more easily fill the ear with some splendid novelty, than awaken those ideas that slumber in the heart.

"The favourite exercise of his mind was ratiocination, and, that argument might not be too soon at an end, he delighted to talk of liberty and necessity, destiny and contingence; these he discusses in the language of the school with so much profundity, that the terms which he uses are seldom understood. It is indeed learning, but learning out of place.

"When once he had engaged himself in disputation, thoughts flowed in on either side: he was now no longer at a loss; he had always argument at command; *verbaque provisam rem*—gave him matter for his verse, and he finds without difficulty verse for his matter.

"In Comedy, for which he professes himself not naturally qualified, the mirth which he excites will perhaps not be found so much to arise from any original humour, or peculiarity of character nicely distinguished and diligently pursued, as from incidents and circumstances, artifices and surprizes: from jests of action rather than of sentiment. What he had of humorous or passionate, he seems to have had not from nature, but from other poets; if not always as a plagiary, at least as an imitator.

"Next to argument, his delight was in wild and daring sallies of sentiment, in the irregular and eccentrick violence of wit. He delighted to tread upon the brink of meaning, where light and darkness begin to mingle; to approach the precipice of absurdity, and hover over the abyss of unideal vacancy. This inclination sometimes produced nonsense, which he knew."

After censuring him for too frequently making use of French words, with other similar improprieties, Johnson thus proceeds—

"These

" Theſe are his faults of affectation; his faults of negligence are beyond recital. Such is the unevenneſs of his compoſitions, that ten lines are ſeldom found together without ſomething of which the reader is aſhamed. Dryden was no rigid judge of his own pages; he ſeldom ſtruggled after ſupreme excellence, but ſnatched in haſte what was within his reach, and when he could content others was himſelf contented. He did not keep preſent to his mind an idea of pure perfection, nor compare his works, ſuch as they were, with what they might be made. He knew to whom he ſhould be oppoſed. He had more muſick than Waller, more vigour than Denham, and more nature than Cowley; and from his contemporaries he was in no danger. Standing therefore in the higheſt place, he had no care to riſe by contending with himſelf, but, while there was no name above his own, was willing to enjoy fame on the eaſieſt terms.

" He was no lover of labour. What he thought ſufficient, he did not ſtop to make better; and allowed himſelf to leave many parts unfiniſhed, in confidence that the good lines would overbalance the bad. What he had once written, he diſmiſſed from his thoughts; and, I believe, there is no example to be found of any correction or improvement made by him after the publication. The haſtineſs of his productions might be the effect of neceſſity; but his ſubſequent neglect could hardly have any other cauſe than impatience of ſtudy.

What can be ſaid of his verſification, will be little more than a dilatation of the praiſe given it by Pope:

" Waller was ſmooth; but Dryden taught to join
" The varying verſe, the full-reſounding line,
" The long majeſtick march, and energy divine.

" Some improvements had been already made in Engliſh numbers; but the full force of our language

was not yet felt; the verſe that was ſmooth was commonly feeble. If Cowley had ſometimes a finiſhed line, he had it by chance. Dryden knew how to chuſe the flowing and the ſonorous words: to vary the pauſes, and adjuſt the accents, to diverſify the cadence, and yet preſerve the ſmoothneſs of his metre."

"Of Dryden's works it was ſaid by Pope, that *he could ſelect from them better ſpecimens of every mode of poetry than any other Engliſh writer could ſupply.* Perhaps no nation ever produced a writer that enriched his language with ſuch variety of models. To him we owe the improvement, perhaps the completion of our metre, the refinement of our language, and much of the correctneſs of our ſentiments. By him we are taught *ſapere et fari*, to think naturally and expreſs forcibly. He taught us that it was poſſible to reaſon in rhyme. He ſhewed us the true bounds of a tranſlator's liberty. What was ſaid of Rome adorned by Auguſtus, may be applied by an eaſy metaphor to Engliſh poetry embelliſhed by Dryden, *lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*, he found it brick, and he left it marble.

DENHAM

WAS born at Dublin in 1615, the only ſon of Sir John Denham, of Little Horſely in Eſſex, then chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland, and of Eleanor, daughter of Sir Garrat Moore, of Mellefont.

Two years afterwards, his father, being made one of the Barons of the Exchequer in England, brought him away from his native country, and educated him in London.

In 1631 he was ſent to Oxford, where he was conſidered "as a dreaming young man, given more to dice and

and cards than ſtudy;" and therefore gave no prognoſticks of his future eminence.

When he was three years afterwards, removed to Lincoln's Inn, he proſecuted the common law, with ſufficient appearance of application; yet did not loſe his propenſity to cards and dice; but was very often plundered by gameſters. He reſolved at length to deſiſt from the practice, and publiſhed "An Eſſay upon Gaming." In 1636, he tranſlated the Second Book of the Æneid. Two years after his father died; and then, notwithſtanding his reſolutions, he returned again to the vice of gaming, and loſt ſeveral thouſand pounds that had been left him.

In 1641, he publiſhed "The Sophy," which ſeems to have given him his firſt hold of the public attention; and afterwards being pricked for Sheriff of Surry, and made Governor of Farnham Caſtle for the king, which he ſoon reſigned, he retreated to Oxford, where, in 1643, he publiſhed "Cooper's Hill."

"In 1647, the diſtreſſes of the Royal family required him to engage in more dangerous employments. He was entruſted by the Queen with a meſſage to the King; and, by whatever means, ſo far ſoftened the ferocity of Hugh Peters, that by his interceſſion admiſſion was procured. Of the King's condeſcenſion he has given an account in the dedication of his works.

He was afterwards employed in carrying on the King's correſpondence; but, being accidentally diſcovered, he made his eſcape.

He was yet engaged in a greater undertaking. In April 1648, he conveyed James the Duke of York from London into France and delivered him there to the Queen and Prince of Wales. This year he publiſhed his tranſlation of "Cato Major."

He now reſided in France as one of the followers of the exiled King; at which time he wrote ſeveral pieces of poetry. At the Reſtoration he obtained, what many

ny miſſed, the reward of his loyalty; being made ſurveyor of the King's Buildings, and dignified with the order of the Bath.

After the Reſtoration he wrote the "Poem on Prudence and Juſtice," and perhaps ſome of his other pieces—He failed, however, in the attempt to make "A Metrical Verſion of the Pſalms of David."

It might be hoped that the favour of his King and the eſteem of the publick would now make him happy. But human felicity is ſhort and uncertain: A ſecond marriage brought upon him ſo much diſquiet, as for a time diſordered his underſtanding. But his frenzy laſted not long; and he ſeems to have regained his full force of mind; for he wrote afterwards his excellent Poem upon the Death of Cowley, whom he was not long to ſurvive; for on the 19th of March 1668 he was buried by his ſide.

"Denham is deſervedly conſidered as one of the fathers of Engliſh poetry." 'Denham and Waller (ſays Prior) improved our verſification, and Dryden perfected it.' "He has given ſpecimens of various compoſitions, deſcriptive, ludicrous, didactick, and ſublime."

"His "Poem on the Death of Cowley" was his laſt, and, among his ſhorter works, his beſt performance: the numbers are muſical, and the thoughts are juſt.

"Cooper's Hill" is the work that confers upon him the rank and dignity of an original Author. He ſeems to have been, at leaſt among us, the Author of a ſpecies of compoſition that may be denominated local poetry, of which the fundamental ſubject is ſome particular landſcape, to be poetically deſcribed, with the addition of ſuch embelliſhments as may be ſupplied by hiſtorical retroſpection or incidental meditation.

"To trace a new ſcheme of poetry has in itſelf a very high claim to praiſe, and its praiſe is yet more when it is apparently copied by Garth and Pope; after whoſe names little will be gained by an enumeration of

of ſmaller poets, that have left ſcarce a corner of the Iſland undignified by rhyme or blank verſe.

"Cooper's Hill," if it be maliciouſly inſpected, will not be found without its faults. The digreſſions are too long, the morality too pregnant, and the ſentiments ſometimes ſuch as will not bear a rigorous enquiry."

After pointing out ſome other of his faults the Critic concludes with theſe words:

"Moſt of theſe petty faults are in his firſt productions, when he was leſs ſkilful, or at leaſt leſs dexterous, in the uſe of words; and though they had been more frequent, they could only have leſſened the grace, not the ſtrength of his compoſition. He is one of the writers that improved our taſte, and advanced our language, and whom we ought therefore to read with gratitude, though, having done much, he left much to do."

SPRAT.

THOMAS SPRAT was born in 1636, at Tallaton in Devonſhire, the ſon of a clergyman; and having been educated, as he tells of himſelf, not at Weſtminſter or Eton, but at a little ſchool by the church-yard ſide, became a commoner of Wadham college in Oxford in 1651; and being choſen ſcholar next year, proceeded through the uſual academical courſe, and in 1657 became maſter of arts, obtained a fellowſhip, and commenced poet.

In 1659, his poem "On the Death of Oliver" was publiſhed, and alſo one on the "Plague of Athens." To theſe he added afterwards a poem "On Mr. Cowley's Death."

After the Reſtoration he took orders, and by Cowley's recommendation was made chaplain to the Duke of Buckingham, whom he is ſaid to have helped in writing "The Rehearſal." He was likewiſe chaplain to the king.

1667 he publiſhed his Hiſtory of the Royal Society, which about that time had been incorporated; and in the next year "Obſervations on Sorbiere's Voyage into England, in a Letter to Mr. Wren," made their appearance.

In 1668 he publiſhed "Cowley's Latin Poems," and prefixed in Latin the life of the Author. In the ſame year he became a prebendary of Weſtminſter, and had afterwards the church of St. Margaret, adjoining to the Abbey. He was in 1680 made Canon of Windſor, in 1683 Dean of Weſtminſter, and in 1684 Biſhop of Rocheſter.

When King James was frighted away, and a new government was to be ſettled, Sprat was one of thoſe who conſidered, in a conference, the great queſtion, whether the crown was vacant, and manfully ſpoke in favour of his old maſter.

He complied, however, with the new eſtabliſhment, and was left unmoleſted. After fully proving his innocence in a plot formed to reſtore King James, and ſeize the Princeſs of Orange, dead or alive, in which he was ſaid to be a party concerned, he paſſed his days in the quiet exerciſe of his function. He lived to his ſeventy-ninth year, and died May 20, 1713.

"The works of Sprat, beſide his few poems, are the Hiſtory of the Royal Society, the Life of Cowley, the Anſwer to Sorbiere, the Hiſtory of the Ryehouſe Plot, the Relation of his own Examination*, and a volume of ſermons. I have heard it obſerved, with great juſtneſs, that every book is of a different kind,

* When taken up on ſuſpicion of being concerned in the plot.

and

and that each has its diſtinct and characteriſtical excellences.

" My buſineſs is only with his poems. He conſidered Cowley as a model, and ſuppoſed that as he was imitated perfection was approached. Nothing therefore but Pindarick liberty was to be expected. There is in his few productions no want of ſuch conceits as he thought excellent; and of thoſe our judgment may be ſettled by the firſt that appears in his praiſe of Cromwell, where he ſays that Cromwell's *fame, like man, will grow white as it grows old.*

ROSCOMMON.

WENTWORTH DILLON, Earl of Roſcommon, was born in Ireland during the lieutenancy of Lord Strafford, who, being his godfather, gave him his own ſurname. His father had been converted by Uſher to the Proteſtant religion; and when the Popiſh rebellion broke out, Strafford, thinking the family in great danger from the fury of the Iriſh, ſent for his godſon, and placed him at his own ſeat in Yorkſhire, where he was inſtructed in Latin; which he learned ſo as to write it with purity and elegance, though he was never able to retain the rules of grammar.

When the ſtorm broke out upon Strafford, Dillon went to Caen, and continued his ſtudies at an univerſity under *Bochart*. Here, it is ſaid, when not ten years of age, he made great proficiency in literature. About this time he loſt his father.

After travelling into Italy, and amuſing himſelf with its antiquities, and particularly with medals, in which he acquired uncommon ſkill, at the Reſtoration, he

came to England was made Captain of the Band of Penſioners, and learned ſo much of the diſſoluteneſs of the court, that he addicted himſelf immoderately to gaming, which undoubtedly brought upon him its uſual concomitants, extravagance and diſtreſs.

After ſome time a diſpute about part of his eſtate forced him into Ireland, where he was made by the Duke of Ormond Captain of the Guards.

When he had finiſhed his buſineſs, he returned to London, was made Maſter of the Horſe to the Dutcheſs of York; and married the Lady Frances, daughter of the Earl of Burlington, and widow of Colonel Courteney.

He now buſied his mind with literary projects, and formed the plan of a ſociety for refining our language, and fixing its ſtandard; *in imitation*, ſays Fenton, *of thoſe learned and polite ſocieties with which he had been acquainted abroad.* In this deſign his friend Dryden is ſaid to have aſſiſted him.

All hopes of new literary inſtitutions were, however, quickly ſuppreſſed by the contentious turbulence of king James's reign; and Roſcommon, foreſeeing that ſome violent concuſſion of the ſtate was at hand, purpoſed to retire to Rome, alleging that *it was beſt to ſit near the chimney, when the chamber ſmoaked*; a ſentence of which the application ſeems not very clear.

His departure was delayed by the gout; and he was ſo impatient either of hindrance or of pain, that he ſubmitted himſelf to a French empirick, who is ſaid to have repelled the diſeaſe into his bowels.

At the moment in which he expired, he uttered, with an energy of voice that expreſſed the moſt fervent devotion, two lines of his own verſion of "Dies Iræ."

My God, my father, and my friend,
Do not forſake me in my end!

He

He died in 1684; and was buried with great pomp in Weſtminſter Abbey.

"Of Roſcommon's works, the judgment of the publick ſeems to be right. He is elegant, but not great; he never labours after exquiſite beauties, and ſeldom falls into groſs faults. His verſification is ſmooth, but rarely vigorous, and his rhymes are remarkably exact. He improved taſte, if he did not enlarge knowledge, and may be numbered among the benefactors to Engliſh literature."

ROCHESTER.

JOHN WILMOT, afterwards Earl of Rocheſter, the ſon of Henry Earl of Rocheſter, better known by the title of Lord Wilmot, was born in April, 1648, at Ditchley in Oxfordſhire. After a grammatical education at the ſchool of Burford, he entered a nobleman into Wadham college in 1659, only eleven years old; and in 1661, at thirteen, was, with ſome other perſons of high rank, made maſter of arts by Lord Clarendon in perſon.

He travelled afterwards into France and Italy; and, at his return, devoted himſelf to a court. In 1665 he diſtinguiſhed himſelf at ſea by uncommon intrepidity, and the next ſummer ſerved again on board Sir Edward Spragge, who, in the heat of the engagement having a meſſage of reproof to ſend to one of his captains, could find no man ready to carry it but Wilmot, who in an open boat went and returned amidſt the ſtorm of ſhot.

But his reputation for bravery was not laſting: he was reproached with ſlinking away in ſtreet quarrels, and leaving his companions to ſhift as they could without

without him; and Sheffield Duke of Buckingham has left a ſtory of his refuſal to fight him.

When he became a courtier he unhappily addicted himſelf to diſſolute and vicious company, by which his principles were corrupted, and his manners depraved. He loſt all ſenſe of religious reſtraint; and finding it not convenient to admit the authority of laws which he was reſolved not to obey, ſheltered his wickedneſs behind infidelity. At one time he indulged an inclination for drinking to ſuch an exceſs, that he confeſſed to Dr. Burnet, he was for five years together continually drunk, or ſo much inflamed by frequent ebriety, as in no interval to be maſter of himſelf.

In this ſtate he played many frolicks. He once erected a ſtage on Tower Hill and harangued the populace as a mountebank; and having made phyſick part of his ſtudy is ſaid to have practiſed it ſucceſsfully.

He was ſo much in favour with King Charles, that he was made one of the Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, and Comptroller of Woodſtock Park. He is mentioned, by Wood, as the greateſt ſcholar of all the nobility. His favourite author in French was Boileau, and in Engliſh Cowley.

At the early age of one and thirty, in conſequence of diſſolute and abandoned habits, he had exhauſted the fund of life, and reduced himſelf to a ſtate of weakneſs and decay.

At this time Dr. Burnet produced a total change both of his manners and opinions, an account of which the Doctor has given, in a book entitled, "Some Paſſages of the Life and Death of John Earl of Rocheſter."

He died July 26, 1680, before he had completed his thirty-third year.

"Lord Rocheſter was eminent for the vigour of his colloquial wit, and remarkable for many wild pranks, and

and ſallies of extravagance. The glare of his general character diffuſed itſelf upon his writings; the compoſitions of a man whoſe name was heard ſo often, were certain of attention, and from many readers certain of applauſe. This blaze of reputation is not yet quite extinguiſhed, and his poetry ſtill retains ſome ſplendour beyond that which genius has beſtowed.

"As he cannot be ſuppoſed to have found leiſure for any courſe of continued ſtudy, his pieces are commonly ſhort, ſuch as one fit of reſolution would produce.

"His ſongs have no particular character: they tell like other ſongs, in ſmooth and eaſy language, of ſcorn and kindneſs, diſmiſſion and deſertion, abſence and inconſtancy, with the common places of artificial courtſhip. They are commonly ſmooth and eaſy; but have little nature, and little ſentiment.

"His imitation of Horace on Lucilius is not inelegant or unhappy. In the reign of Charles the Second began that adaptation, which has ſince been very frequent, of ancient poetry to preſent times, and perhaps few will be found where the paralleliſm is better preſerved than in this. The verſification is indeed ſometimes careleſs, but it is ſometimes vigorous and weighty. The ſtrongeſt effort of his muſe is his poem upon "Nothing."

"In all his works there is ſprightlineſs and vigour, and every where may be found tokens of a mind which ſtudy might have carried to excellence; and what more can be expected from a life ſpent in oſtentatious contempt of regularity, and ended before the abilities of many other men begin to be diſplayed*?"

* Some Letters of Lord Rocheſter to his wife (which place his character in a new point of view, and which were never before publiſhed) appeared in the European Magazine for October 1796, p. 244. *et ſeq.*

YALDEN.

YALDEN.

THOMAS YALDEN, the ſixth ſon of Mr. John Yalden of Suſſex, was born in the city of Exeter in 1671. Having been educated in the grammar ſchool belonging to Magdalen College in Oxford, he was in 1690, at the age of nineteen, admitted commoner of Magdalen Hall, under the tuition of *Joſeph Pullen*. He became next year one of the ſcholars of Magdalen College.

Among his contemporaries in the college were Addiſon and Sacheverel, men who were in thoſe times friends, and who both adopted Yalden to their intimacy. When Namur was taken by King William Yalden made an ode, and afterwards wrote "A Poem on the Death of the Duke of Glouceſter."

In 1701, he became fellow of the college, and next year, entering into orders, was preſented by the ſociety with a living in Warwickſhire, and choſen lecturer of moral philoſophy. On the acceſſion of Queen Anne he wrote another poem; and in 1706 was received into the family of the Duke of Beaufort. Next year he became Doctor in Divinity, and ſoon after reſigned his fellowſhip and lecture, and, as a token of his gratitude, gave the college a picture of their founder.

He was made rector of *Chalton* and *Cleanville* in Hertfordſhire, and had the prebends or ſinecures of *Deans*, *Haines*, and *Pendles* in Devonſhire. He had been before choſen, in 1698, preacher of Bridewell Hoſpital.

From this time he ſeems to have led a quiet and inoffenſive life, till he was taken into cuſtody on ſuſpi-

cion

cion of being concerned in Atterbury's plot; but there being no evidence againſt him, he was ſet at liberty.

He ſtill enjoyed the friendſhip and converſation of a very numerous and ſplendid body of acquaintance till his death, which happened July 16, 1736, in the 66th year of his age.

"Of his poems many are of that irregular kind, which, when he formed his poetical character, was ſuppoſed to be Pindarick. Having fixed his attention on Cowley as a model, he has attempted in ſome ſort to rival him, and has written a "Hymn to Darkneſs," evidently as a counterpart to Cowley's "Hymn to Light."

"This hymn ſeems to be his beſt performance, and is, for the moſt part, imagined with great vigour, and expreſſed with great propriety. The ſeven firſt ſtanzas are good; but the third, fourth and ſeventh are the beſt: the tenth is exquiſitely beautiful; the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, are partly mythological and partly religious, and therefore not ſuitable to each other: he might better have made the whole merely philoſophical."

"Of his other poems it is ſufficient to ſay that they deſerve peruſal, though they are not always exactly poliſhed and the rhymes are ſometimes very ill ſorted, and though his faults ſeem rather the omiſſions of idleneſs than the negligences of enthuſiaſm."

OTWAY.

LITTLE is known of this great but unfortunate writer.

He was born at Trottin in Suſſex, March 3, 1651 the ſon of Mr. Humphry Otway, rector of Woolbeding. From Wincheſter ſchool, he was entered in 1669 a Commoner

a Commoner of Chriſt Church, but left the Univerſity without a degree; whether for want of money, or from impatience of academical reſtraint, or mere eagerneſs to mingle with the world, is not known.

On his arrival in London he commenced player, but finding himſelf unable to gain any reputation on the ſtage, he thought he poſſeſſed ſuch powers as might qualify him for a dramatic author. In 1675, his twenty-fifth year, he produced "Alcibiades, a Tragedy." In 1677 he publiſhed "Titus and Berenice," tranſlated from Rapin, with the "Cheats of Scapin" from Moliere; and in 1678 "Friendſhip in Faſhion," a comedy, which, whatever might be its firſt reception, was, upon its revival at Drury Lane in 1749, hiſſed off the ſtage for immorality and obſcenity.

Otway, it is ſaid, was about this time a favourite of the diſſolute wits, who in general did no more for him than pay his reckoning. Men of wit, ſays one of Otway's biographers, received at that period no favour from the great but to ſhare their riots, *from which they were diſmiſſed again to their own narrow circumſtances. Thus they languiſhed in poverty without the ſupport of eminence.*

Some exception, however, muſt be made. The Earl of Plymouth, one of King Charles's natural ſons, procured for Otway a cornet's commiſſion in ſome troops then ſent into Flanders. But he did not proſper in his military character; for, whatever was the reaſon, he came back to London in extreme indigence.

In 1675 "Don Carlos" was played, and it is ſaid with great ſucceſs. "The Orphan" was exhibited in 1680, and in the ſame year he produced the "Hiſtory of Caius Marius," much of which is borrowed from the "Romeo and Juliet" of Shakeſpeare.

In 1683 was publiſhed the firſt, and, the next year, the ſecond parts of "The Soldier's Fortune," two comedies now forgotten; and in 1685 his laſt and greateſt dramatick work, "Venice Preſerved," a tragedy, which

which ſtill continues to be one of the favourites of the publick; together with theſe plays he wrote ſeveral poems, and tranſlated from the French the "Hiſtory of the Triumvirate."

"All this was performed before he was thirty-four years old; for he died April 14, 1685, in a manner which I am unwilling to mention. Having been compelled by his neceſſities to contract debts, and hunted, as is ſuppoſed by the terriers of the law, he retired to a public houſe on Tower Hill, where he died of want, or, as it is related by one of his biographers, by ſwallowing, after a long faſt, a piece of bread which charity had ſupplied. He went out, as it is reported, almoſt naked, in the rage of hunger, and finding a gentleman in a neighbouring coffee-houſe, aſked him for a ſhilling. The gentleman gave him a guinea; and Otway going away bought a roll, and was choaked with the firſt mouthful. All this I hope is not true; but that indigence and its concomitants, ſorrow and deſpondency, brought him to the grave, has never been denied."

"Of the poems which this Collection * admits, the longeſt is the "Poet's complaint of his Muſe," part of which I do not underſtand; and in that which is leſs obſcure I find but little to commend. The language is often groſs, and the numbers are harſh. Otway had not much cultivated verſification, nor much repleniſhed his mind with general knowledge. His principal power was in moving the paſſions, to which Dryden in his latter years left an illuſtrious teſtimony. He appears, by ſome of his verſes, to have been a zealous royaliſt, and had what was in thoſe times the common reward of loyalty, he lived and died neglected."

* That is, "The Works of the Engliſh Poets" to which theſe Lives were originally prefixed, and for which indeed they were purpoſely written.

DUKE.

DUKE.

OF Mr. Richard Duke's life there are few materials. He was bred at Weſtminſter and Cambridge; and Jacob relates, that he was ſome time tutor to the Duke of Richmond. He was the familiar friend of Otway, and was engaged, among other popular names, in the tranſlation of Ovid and Juvenal. "In his "Review," though unfiniſhed, are ſome vigorous lines. His poems are not below mediocrity; nor have I found much in them to be praiſed."

After publiſhing ſome ſermons, in 1683, being then Maſter of Arts, and Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, he wrote "A Poem on the Marriage of Lady Anne with George Prince of Denmark."

He took orders, and being made Prebendary of Glouceſter became Proctor in Convocation for that church, and chaplain to Queen Anne.

In 1710, he was preſented by the Biſhop of Winchester to the wealthy living of Witney in Oxfordſhire, which he enjoyed but a few months. On February 10, 1710-11, having returned from an entertainment, he was found dead the next morning.

DORSET.

CHARLES SACKVILLE was born January 24, 1637. Having been educated under a private tutor, he travelled into Italy, and returned a little before the Reſtoration. He was choſen into the firſt Parliament

Parliament that was called for Eaſt Grinſtead in Suſſex, and ſoon became a favourite of Charles the Second, having entered into all the riotous and licentious pleaſures which at that time engaged the attention of the followers of the court.

In 1665, being now Lord Buckhurſt, he attended the Duke of York as a volunteer in the Dutch war; and was in the battle of June the third, when eighteen great Dutch ſhips were taken, and fourteen others deſtroyed, and Opdam the admiral, who engaged the Duke, was blown up beſide him, with all his crew.

On the day before the battle he is ſaid to have compoſed the celebrated ſong "To all you Ladies now at Land," with equal tranquility of mind and promptitude of wit. The Earl of Orrery uſed to deny this fact, and ſay that Lord Buckhurſt had been a week employed upon it, and only retouched or finiſhed it on the memorable evening. He was ſoon after made a Gentleman of the bedchamber, and ſent on ſhort embaſſies to France.

In 1674, the eſtate of his uncle James Cranfield, Earl of Middleſex, came to him by its owner's death, and the title was conferred on him the year after. In 1677, he became by the death of his father Earl of Dorſet, and inherited the eſtate of his family.

In 1684, having buried his firſt wife, of the family of Bagot, who left him no child, he married a daughter of the Earl of Northampton, celebrated both for beauty and underſtanding.

On the acceſſion of King William he was made Lord Chamberlain of the Houſhold, and the king afterwards gave him the garter. He was one of thoſe that were toſſed with his majeſty in an open boat ſixteen hours, in very rough cold weather on the coaſt of Holland: His health afterwards declined; and on January 19, 1705-6, he died at Bath.

"His

" His performances are, what they pretend to be, the effuſions of a man of wit; gay, vigorous, and airy. " His Verſes to Howard" ſhew great fertility of mind, and his " Dorinda" has been imitated by Pope."

HALIFAX.

CHARLES MONTAGUE was born April 16, 1661, at Horton in Northamptonſhire, the ſon of Mr. George Montague, a younger ſon of the Earl of Mancheſter. He was educated firſt in the country, and then removed to Weſtminſter; when in 1677 he was choſen a king's ſcholar, and recommended himſelf to Buſby by his felicity in extemporary epigrams. In 1682, he was removed to Cambridge, but not before he arrived at the age of one-and-twenty.

His relation Dr. Montague was then maſter of the college in which he was placed a fellow-commoner, and took him under his particular care. Here he commenced an acquaintance with the great Newton, which continued through his life, and was at laſt atteſted by a legacy.

In 1685 his verſes on the death of King Charles made ſuch impreſſion on the Earl of Dorſet, that he was invited to town, and introduced by that univerſal patron to the other wits. In 1687 he joined with Prior in the " City Mouſe and Country Mouſe," a burleſque of Dryden's " Hind and Panther." He ſigned the invitation to the Prince of Orange, and ſat in the convention. About the ſame time he married the Counteſs Dowager of Mancheſter, and intended to have taken orders: but afterwards, altering his purpoſe, he purchaſed for 1500l. the place of one of the Clerks of the Council.

After

After he had written his epiſtle "On the Victory of the Boyne," his patron Dorſet introduced him to King William, and in 1691, being a member in the Houſe of Commons, he argued warmly in favour of a law to grant the aſſiſtance of counſel in trials for high treaſon. In the midſt of his ſpeech, falling into ſome confuſion, he was for a while ſilent: but, recovering himſelf, obſerved, "how reaſonable it was to allow counſel to men called as criminals before a court of juſtice, when it appeared how much the preſence of that aſſembly could diſconcert one of their own body*."

He was afterwards made one of the Commiſſioners of the Treaſury and called to the Privy council. In 1694, he became Chancellor of the Exchequer; and the next year engaged in the great attempt of the recoinage. In 1696 he projected the *general fund*, and raiſed the credit of the Exchequer; and after enquiry concerning a grant of Iriſh crown lands, it was determined by a vote of the Commons, that Charles Montague, Eſq; *had deſerved his Majeſty's favour*. In 1698, being advanced to the commiſſion of the treaſury, he was appointed one of the Regency in the king's abſence: the next year he was made Auditor of the Exchequer; and the year after created *Baron Halifax*. He was however impeached by the Commons, but the articles were diſmiſſed by the Lords.

At the acceſſion of Queen Anne he was diſmiſſed from the council; and in the firſt parliament of her reign was again attacked by the Commons, and again eſcaped by the protection of the Lords. In 1704, he wrote an anſwer to Bromley's ſpeech againſt occaſional conformity. In 1706 he propoſed and negociated the union with Scotland; and when the Elector of Hanover received the Garter, after the act had paſſed

* This anecdote is moſt commonly related of the Earl of Shaftesbury, author of the Characteriſtics.

for

for ſecuring the Proteſtant ſucceſſion, he was appointed to carry the enſigns of the order to the Electoral Court. He ſat as one of the judges of Sacheverel, but voted for a mild ſentence. Being now no longer in favour, he contrived to obtain a writ for ſummoning the Electoral prince to parliament as Duke of Cambridge.

At the Queen's death he was appointed one of the Regents; and at the acceſſion of George the Firſt was made Earl of Halifax, Knight of the Garter, and Firſt Commiſſioner of the Treaſury, with a grant to his nephew of the reverſion of the Auditorſhip of the Exchequer. This he kept but a little while; for on the 19th of May 1715 he died of an inflammation of his lungs.

As a poet Dr. Johnſon ſpeaks of him in the following manner.

"Many a blandiſhment was practiſed upon Halifax, which he would never have known had he had no other attractions than thoſe of his poetry, of which a ſhort time has withered the beauties. It would now be eſteemed no honour, by a contributor to the monthly bundles of verſes, to be told, that, in ſtrains either familiar or ſolemn, he ſings like Montague."

STEPNEY.

GEORGE STEPNEY, deſcended from the Stepney's of Pendegraſt in Pembrokeſhire, was born at Weſtminſter in 1663. Of his father's condition or fortune there is no account. Having received the firſt part of his education at Weſtminſter, he went to Cambridge, where he continued a friendſhip begun at ſchool with Mr. Montague, afterwards Earl of Halifax. They

They came to London together, and are said to have been invited into public life by the Duke of Dorset.

The qualifications of Stepney recommended him to many foreign employments, so that his time seems to have been spent in negociations. In 1692 he was sent envoy to the Elector of Brandenburgh; in 1693 to the Imperial court; in 1694 to the Elector of Saxony; in 1696 to the Electors of Mentz and Cologne, and the congress at Franckfort; in 1698 a second time to Brandenburgh; in 1699 to the King of Poland; in 1701 again to the Emperor; and in 1706 to the States General. In 1697 he was made one of the Commissioners of Trade. He died in 1707; and is buried in Westminster Abbey, with a Latin epitaph.

"He apparently professed himself a poet," says Johnson, "and added his name to those of the other wits in the version of Juvenal; but he is a very licentious translator, and does not recompence his neglect of the author by beauties of his own. In his original poems, now and then a happy line may perhaps be found, and now and then a short composition may give pleasure. But there is in the whole little either of the grace of wit, or the vigour of nature."

WALSH.

WILLIAM WALSH, the son of Joseph Walsh, Esq; of Abberley in Worcestershire, was born in 1663, as appears from the account of Wood; who relates, that at the age of fifteen he became in 1678, a Gentleman Commoner of Wadham College.

He left the University without a degree; and pursued his studies in London and at home; that he studied is apparent from the effect; for he became in Mr. Dryden's opinion, *the best critick in the nation.*

He was not, however, merely a critick or a ſcholar. He was likewiſe a Member of Parliament, and a courtier, Knight of the Shire for his native county in ſeveral Parliaments; in another the repreſentative of Richmond in Yorkſhire, and Gentleman of the Horſe to Queen Anne under the Duke of Somerſet.

He gave Dryden "A Diſſertation on Virgil's Paſtorals," in which, however ſtudied, he diſcovers ſome ignorance of the laws of French verſification.

In 1705, he began to correſpond with Mr. Pope, in whom he diſcovered very early the power of poetry. Their letters are written upon the paſtoral comedy of the Italians, and thoſe paſtorals which Pope was then preparing to publiſh.

If Wood's account be right, he died in 1709. His epitaph makes him 46 years old.

"In all his writings," ſays the critic, "there are pleaſing paſſages. He has however more elegance than vigour, and ſeldom riſes higher than to be pretty."

GARTH.

SAMUEL GARTH was of a good family in Yorkſhire, and from ſome ſchool in his own country became a ſtudent at Peterhouſe in Cambridge, where he reſided, till he commenced Doctor of Phyſick on July 7, 1691. He was admitted fellow of the College at London July 26, 1692, and was ſoon ſo much diſtinguiſhed by his converſation and accompliſhments, as to obtain very extenſive practice.

He is always mentioned as a man of benevolence, which was fully proved by his great zeal in forwarding the undertaking of the *Diſpenſary*, which occaſioned him to write his poem of that name. In 1697 he

he ſpoke that which is now called the *Harveian* Oration, and in October 1702 became one of the cenſors of the college.

Garth, being an active and zealous Whig, was a member of the Kit-cat Club, and conſequently known to all the great men of that denomination. In 1710, when the government fell into other hands, he wrote to Lord Godolphin a ſhort poem on his diſmiſſion.

At the acceſſion of the preſent family his merits were acknowledged and rewarded. He was knighted with the ſword of his hero, Marlborough; and was made phyſician in ordinary to the king, and phyſician general to the army.

He then undertook an edition of "Ovid's Metamorphoſes," tranſlated by ſeveral hands; which he recommended by a preface. This was his laſt work. He died January 18, 1717-18, and was buried at Harrow on the Hill.

"His poetry has been praiſed at leaſt equally to its merit. In the "Diſpenſary" there is a ſtrain of ſmooth and free verſification; but few lines are eminently elegant. No paſſages fall below mediocrity, and few riſe much above it. The plan ſeems formed without juſt proportion to the ſubject; the means and end have no neceſſary connection. *Meſnel*, in his "Preface to Pope's Eſſay," remarks, that Garth exhibits no diſcrimination of characters; and that what any one ſays might with equal propriety have been ſaid by another. The general deſign is open to criticiſm; but the compoſition can ſeldom be charged with inaccuracy or negligence. The author never ſlumbers in ſelf-indulgence; his full vigour is always exerted; ſcarce a line is left unfiniſhed, nor is it eaſy to find an expreſſion uſed by conſtraint, or a thought imperfectly expreſſed. It was remarked by Pope, that the "Diſpenſary" had been corrected in every edition, and that every change was an improvement. It appears, however, to want ſomething

of general delectation; and therefore, ſince it has been no longer ſupported by accidental and extrinſick popularity, it has been ſcarcely able to ſupport itſelf."

KING.

WILLIAM KING was born in London in 1663, the ſon of Ezekiel King, a gentleman. He was allied to the family of Clarendon.

From Weſtminſter ſchool, he was at eighteen elected to Chriſt Church in 1681; where it is ſaid he proſecuted his ſtudies with much intenſeneſs and activity. In 1688 he took his degree, and publiſhed "A Confutation of Varillas's Account of Wickliffe." He then engaged in the ſtudy of the civil law, became Doctor in 1692, and was admitted Advocate at Doctor's Commons.

He had already made ſome tranſlations from the French and written ſome humorous and ſatirical pieces. He alſo undertook to confute a book entitled "An Account of Denmark," written by Moleſworth, treating the Danes and their monarch with great contempt. In 1697, he mingled in the controverſy between Boyle and Bentley, and in 1699 he publiſhed "A Journey to London," after the method of Dr. *Martin Liſter*. In 1700, he ſatirized the Royal Society, at leaſt Sir *Hans Sloane* their preſident, in two dialogues entitled, "The Tranſactioneer."

Although his reputation as a Civilian was raiſed to a conſiderable height, ſtill the expence of his pleaſures had now leſſened his revenues; and he was willing to accept of a ſettlement in Ireland, where, about 1702, he was made Judge of the Admiralty, Commiſſioner of the Prizes, Keeper of the Records in Birmingham's

ham's tower, and Vicar General to Dr. Marſh the Primate.

King ſoon found a friend as idle and thoughtleſs as himſelf, in *Upton*, one of the judges, who had a pleaſant houſe called Mount-town, near Dublin, to which King frequently retired; delighting to neglect his intereſt, forget his cares, and deſert his duty. Here he wrote "Mully of Mount-town," a poem.

In 1708, when Lord Wharton was ſent to govern Ireland, King returned to London, with his poverty, his idleneſs, and his wit, and publiſhed ſome Eſſays called "Uſeful Tranſactions." His "Voyage to the Iſland of Cajamai" is particularly commended. He then wrote the "Art of Love," a poem remarkable, notwithſtanding its title, for purity of ſentiment; and in 1709 imitated Horace in an "Art of Cookery," which he publiſhed, with ſome letters to Dr. Liſter.

In 1710 he appeared, as a lover of the church, on the ſide of Sacheverell; and was ſuppoſed to have concurred at leaſt in the projection of "The Examiner." The year following he publiſhed the "Hiſtory of the Heathen Gods," a book compoſed for ſchools, an hiſtorical eſſay called "Rufinus," and a poem intended to diſpoſe the nation to think as he thought of the Duke of Marlborough and his adherents. About the ſame time he was made Gazetteer, a profitable employment; but, not liking its duties, he reſigned it, and returned to his wonted indigence and amuſement.

In the autumn of 1712, his health declined; he grew weaker by degrees, and died on Chriſtmas day.

"After this relation," as Dr. Johnſon ſays, "it will be naturally ſuppoſed that his poems were rather the amuſement of idleneſs than the efforts of ſtudy; that he endeavoured rather to divert than aſtoniſh; that his thoughts ſeldom aſpired to ſublimity; and that if his verſe was eaſy, and his images familiar, he attained

what he desired. His purpose is to be merry; though perhaps to enjoy his mirth, it may be sometimes necessary to think well of his opinions."

JOHN PHILIPS.

JOHN PHILIPS was born on the 30th of December 1676 at Bampton in Oxfordshire; of which place his father Dr. Stephen Philips, Archdeacon of Salop, was minister. The first part of his education was domestick, after which he was sent to Winchester, where he soon distinguished himself by the superiority of his exercises, and endeared himself to his schoolfellows by his civility and good-nature. It is said that he seldom mingled with them in play, but retired to his chamber, where he used to sit hour after hour, while his hair was combed by somebody, whose service he found means to procure.

At school he became acquainted with the poets antient and modern, and fixed his attention particularly on Milton.

In 1694, he entered himself at Christ Church, where he was distinguished as a genius eminent among the eminent. The profession which he intended to follow was that of physick; and he took much delight in natural history, of which botany was his favourite part.

In 1703 he published the "Splendid Shilling," which struck the publick attention with a mode of writing new and unexpected. "Blenheim" appeared in 1705. The next year produced his greatest work, the poem upon "Cider," in two books; which was received with loud praises. He then began to meditate a poem on the "Last Day," but did not live to finish it. A

slow

ſlow conſumption and an aſthma put an end to his exiſtence on the 15th of February 1708, at the beginning of his thirty-third year. He was buried in the cathedral of Hereford; and Sir *Simon Harcourt*, afterwards Lord Chancellor, gave him a monument in Weſtminſter Abbey.

" His works are few. The " Splendid Shilling" has the uncommon merit of an original deſign, unleſs it may be thought precluded by the ancient Centos. To degrade the ſounding words and ſtately conſtruction of Milton, by an application to the loweſt and moſt trivial things, gratifies the mind with a momentary triumph over that grandeur which held its captives in admiration; the words and things are preſented with a new appearance, and novelty is always grateful where it gives no pain."

The poem of " Blenheim" Johnſon ſeems to conſider only as a *tolerable* production. On that entitled " Cider" he criticiſes thus—

" To the poem on " Cider," written in imitation of the " Georgicks" may be given this peculiar praiſe, that it is grounded in truth; that the precepts which it contains are exact and juſt; and that it is therefore, at once, a book of entertainment and of ſcience. This I was told by Miller, the great gardener and botaniſt, whoſe expreſſion was, *that there were many books, written on the ſame ſubject in proſe, which do not contain ſo much as that poem.*

" In the diſpoſition of his matter, ſo as to interſperſe precepts relating to the culture of trees, with ſentiments more generally pleaſing, and in eaſy and graceful tranſitions from one ſubject to another, he has very diligently imitated his maſter; but he unhappily pleaſed himſelf with blank verſe, and ſuppoſed that the numbers of Milton, which impreſs the mind with veneration, combined as they are with ſubjects of inconceivable grandeur, could be ſuſtained by

images which at moſt can riſe only to elegance. Contending angels may ſhake the regions of heaven in blank verſe, but the flow of equal meaſures, and the embelliſhment of rhyme, muſt recommend to our attention the art of engrafting, and decide the merit of the *redſtreak* and *pearmain*.

"What ſtudy could confer, Philips had obtained; but natural deficience cannot be ſupplied. He ſeems not born to greatneſs and elevation. He is never lofty, nor does he often ſurpriſe with unexpected excellence; but perhaps to his laſt poem may be applied what Tully ſaid of the work of Lucretius, that *it is written with much art, though with few blazes of genius.*"

SMITH.

EDMUND NEAL, known by the name of Smith, was born at Handley, the ſeat of the Lechmeres in Worceſterſhire. The year of his birth is uncertain. Some misfortunes of his father of the name of Neal, ſoon after followed by his death, were the occaſion of the ſons being left very young in the hands of a near relation (one who married Mr. Neal's ſiſter) whoſe name (Smith) he retained.

He was educated at Weſtminſter, and took his maſter's degree on the 8th of July 1696; he therefore was probably admitted into the Univerſity of Oxford in 1689, when we may ſuppoſe him twenty years old. His reputation for literature in his college was conſiderable; but the indecency and licentiouſneſs of his behaviour drew upon him December 24, 1694, while he was yet only a Batchelor, a publick admonition, entered upon record, in order to his expulſion.

Before

Before this period, in 1691, he wrote his excellent Latin Ode "On the Death of the great Orientaliſt Dr. Pocock."

He proceeded to take his degree of Maſter of Arts July 8, 1696. As he advanced in years, he advanced in reputation; for he continued to cultivate his mind; but he did not amend his irregularities, by which he gave ſo much offence, that he loſt the office of Cenſorſhip when he offered himſelf a candidate for it, in conſequence of the irregularity of his conduct, it not being thought proper to truſt the ſuperintendence of others to a man who took ſo little care of himſelf.

Notwithſtanding this, however, he was endured at Oxford for ſome time longer, they being unwilling to loſe ſo great a genius and ſo good a ſcholar.—Till they were at laſt compelled, on the 20th December 1705, to put the ſentence in execution which had been declared five years before.

He was now driven to London, where he aſſociated himſelf with the Whigs, and was ſupported by the liberality of thoſe who delighted in his converſation.

He next turned his mind to the publick exhibition of his tragedy of "Phædra," which play pleaſed the criticks, and the criticks only, for as Addiſon has recorded, it was hardly heard the third night. This neglect has been mentioned in the "Spectator" by this elegant writer, as diſgraceful to the nation.

In 1709, a year after the performance of this tragedy, died John Philips, the friend and fellow-collegian of Smith, who on that occaſion wrote a poem, which juſtice muſt place among the beſt elegies which our language can ſhew, an elegant mixture of fondneſs and admiration, of dignity and ſoftneſs. He intended to accompany his "Longinus" with ſome illuſtrations, and had ſelected his inſtances of the "falſe ſublime" from the work of Blackmore.

He reſolved to try again the fortune of the ſtage with the ſtory of "Lady Jane Gray;" and having

formed his plan, and collected materials, he declared that a few months would complete his design. That he might purſue his work with fewer avocations, he was, in June 1710, invited by Mr. George Ducket to his houſe at Hartham in Wiltſhire. Here he indulged to ſuch an exceſs in eating and drinking that he found himſelf plethorick, which induced him to take a cathartic medicine of a moſt powerful nature, in oppoſition to the advice of an apothecary, and which brought him to the grave in July 1710. He was buried at Hartham.

Johnſon ſays but little of him as a man or a poet. We ſhall give the reader the moſt ſtriking paſſages.

"Smith was a man," ſays Johnſon, "of ſuch eſtimation among his companions, that the caſual cenſures or praiſes which he dropped in converſation were conſidered, like thoſe of Scaliger, as worthy of preſervation.

"He had great readineſs and exactneſs of criticiſm, and by a curſory glance over a new compoſition would exactly tell all its faults and beauties.

"He was remarkable for the power of reading with great rapidity, and of retaining with great fidelity what he ſo eaſily collected.

"He therefore always knew what the preſent queſtion required; and when his friends expreſſed their wonder at his acquiſition, made in a ſtate of apparent negligence and drunkenneſs, he never diſcovered his hours of reading or method of ſtudy, but involved himſelf in affected ſilence, and fed his own vanity with their admiration and conjectures.

"One practice he had, which was eaſily obſerved: if any thought or image was preſented to his mind, that he could uſe or improve, he did not ſuffer it to be loſt; but amidſt the jollity of a tavern, or in the warmth of converſation, very diligently committed it to paper."

POMFRET.

POMFRET.

OF Mr. John Pomfret, nothing is known, but from a ſlight and confuſed account prefixed to his poems by a nameleſs friend; who relates, that he was the ſon of the Rev. Mr. Pomfret, Rector of Luton in Bedfordſhire; that he was bred at Cambridge, entered into orders, and was Rector of Malden in Bedfordſhire. A malicious interpretation of ſome paſſage in his "Choice," inferring, that he conſidered happineſs as more likely to be found in the company of a miſtreſs than of a wife, prevented him from riſing higher in the church.

Notwithſtanding this opinion, he married; but waiting in London in the expectation of ſome preferment, he caught the ſmall pox, and died in 1703 in the thirty-ſixth year of his age.

"He publiſhed his poems in 1699; and has been always the favourite of that claſs of readers, who, without vanity or criticiſm, ſeek only their own amuſement.

"His "Choice" exhibits a ſyſtem of life adapted to common notions, and equal to common expectations; ſuch a ſtate as affords plenty and tranquility, without excluſion of intellectual pleaſures. Perhaps no compoſition in our language has been oftener peruſed than Pomfret's "Choice."

"In his other poems there is an eaſy volubility; the pleaſure of ſmooth metre is afforded to the ear, and the mind is not oppreſſed with ponderous, or entangled with intricate ſentiment. He pleaſes many, and he who pleaſes many muſt have merit."

HUGHES.

JOHN HUGHES, the ſon of a citizen of London, and of Anne Burgeſs, of an ancient family in Wiltſhire, was born at Marlborough, July 29, 1677. He was educated at a private ſchool and made conſiderable advances in literature.

At nineteen he drew the plan of a tragedy, and paraphraſed rather too diffuſely, the Ode of Horace which begins "Integer Vitæ." He alſo poſſeſſed ſome ſkill in muſick and painting.

Although he had a place in the office of Ordnance, and was ſecretary to ſeveral commiſſions for purchaſing lands neceſſary to ſecure the royal docks at Chatham and Portſmouth, ſtill he found time from buſineſs to acquaint himſelf with modern languages. In 1697 he publiſhed "A Poem on the Peace of Ryſwick;" and in 1699, another piece called "The Court of Neptune," on the return of King William, which he addreſſed to Mr. Montague the general patron of the followers of the muſes. The ſame year he produced "A Song on the Duke of Glouceſter's Birth-day."

About this time he wrote in proſe "An Eſſay on the Pleaſure of being deceived." In 1702 he publiſhed, on the Death of King William, a Pindarick Ode called "The Houſe of Naſſau;" and wrote another paraphraſe on the "Otium Divos" of Horace.

In 1703 his "Ode on Muſick" was performed at Stationers Hall; and he wrote afterwards ſix cantatas, which were ſet to muſick by the greateſt maſter of the time. His reputation was now ſo far advanced, that he

he was ſolicited to prefix a preface to the tranſlation of "Boccalini," and he afterwards tranſlated Fontenelle's "Dialogues of the Dead," to which he added two dialogues compoſed by himſelf.

His next attempt was his tranſlation of Moliere's "Miſer;" but he never offered it to the ſtage. He alſo aſſiſted the "Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian." In 1712 he tranſlated Vertot's "Hiſtory of the Revolution of Portugal;" produced an "Ode to the Creator of the World, from the Fragments of Orpheus;" and brought upon the ſtage an opera called "Calypſo and Telemachus."

There was at this time a project formed by Tonſon for a tranſlation of the "Pharſalia" by ſeveral hands; and Hughes engliſhed the tenth book. The deſign however was dropped by them, and the whole work was afterwards performed by Rowe.

It is told on good authority, that Cato was finiſhed and played by his perſuaſion. It had long wanted the laſt act, which he was deſired by Addiſon to ſupply; but when Hughes came in a week to ſhew him his firſt attempt, he found half the act written by Addiſon himſelf.

He afterwards publiſhed the works of "Spenſer," with his life, "a Gloſſary," and "a Diſcourſe on Allegorical Poetry." The ſame year produced his "Apollo and Daphne." Hughes had hitherto ſuffered the mortification of a narrow fortune; but in 1717 the Lord Chancellor Cowper ſet him at eaſe, by making him Secretary to the Commiſſions of the Peace; in which he afterwards, by a particular requeſt, deſired his ſucceſſor Lord Parker to continue him. He had now affluence; but ſuch is human life, that he had it when his declining health could neither allow him long poſſeſſion nor quick enjoyment.

His laſt work was his tragedy of "The Siege of Damaſcus;" for he was now grown weak with a lingering

gering conſumption, and not able to attend the rehearſal; yet was he ſo vigorous in his faculties that only ten days before his death he wrote the dedication to his patron Lord Cowper. On February 17, 1719,20, the play was repreſented, and the author died. He lived to hear it was well received; but paid no regard to the intelligence, being then wholly employed in the meditations of a departing Chriſtian.

Dr. Johnſon gives a character of the genius of Hughes by tranſcribing the following correſpondence of *Swift* and Pope.

"A month ago, ſays Swift, was ſent me over, by a friend of mine the works of John Hughes, Eſq. They are in proſe and verſe. I never heard of the man in my life, yet I find your name as a ſubſcriber. He is too great a poet for me; and I think among *mediocriſts*, in proſe as well as verſe."

To this Pope returns: "To anſwer your queſtions as to Mr. Hughes; what he wanted in genius, he made up as an honeſt man; but he was of the claſs you think him."

ADDISON.

JOSEPH ADDISON was born on the 1ſt of May 1672, at Milſton, of which his father, Lancelot Addiſon, was then Rector, near Ambreſbury in Wiltſhire, and appearing weak and unlikely to live, he was chriſtened the ſame day. After the uſual domeſtick education, he was committed to the care of Mr. Naiſh at Ambreſbury, and afterwards of Mr. Taylor at Saliſbury.

In 1683, in his twelfth year, his father being made Dean of Lichfield, naturally carried his family to his new

new reſidence, and placed his ſon under Mr. Shaw, then Maſter of the School at Lichfield—At what time he was ſent to the School of the Chartreux, is not known, or whether he was removed there from Saliſbury or Lichfield—It was, however, at that place he contracted that intimacy with Sir Richard Steele, which their joint labours have ſo effectually recorded.

In 1687, he was entered of Queen's College in Oxford; where, in 1689, the accidental peruſal of ſome Latin verſes gained him the patronage of Dr. Lancaſter, afterwards Provoſt of Queen's College; by whoſe recommendation he was elected into Magdalen College as a Demy, a term by which that ſociety denominates thoſe which are elſewhere called Scholars; young men who partake of the founder's benefaction, and ſucceed in their order to vacant fellowſhips. He took the degree of M. A. February 14, 1693. Here he continued to cultivate poetry and criticiſm, and grew firſt eminent by his Latin compoſitions. He collected a ſecond volume of the "Muſæ Anglicanæ," in which all his Latin pieces are inſerted, and where his poem on the Peace has the firſt place. He afterwards preſented the collection to Boileau, who from that time *conceived*, ſays Tickell, *an opinion of the Engliſh genius for poetry*.

In his 22d year he firſt ſhewed his power of Engliſh poetry, by ſome verſes addreſſed to Dryden; and ſoon afterwards publiſhed a tranſlation of the greater part of the fourth Georgick upon Bees; after which, ſays Dryden, *my latter ſwarm is hardly worth the hiving*. About the ſame time he compoſed the arguments prefixed to the ſeveral books of "Dryden's Virgil;" and produced "an Eſſay on the Georgicks." His next paper of Verſes contained a character of the principal Engliſh poets.

About this period he was introduced by Congreve to Montague, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, by whoſe

whose influence he was diverted from his original design of entering into holy orders.

Soon after (in 1695) he wrote a poem to King William; addressed to Lord Somers. In 1697, he wrote his poem "On the Peace of Ryswick," which he dedicated to Montague, and which was afterwards called by Smith *the best Latin poem* since the Æneid.

Having yet no publick employment, he obtained (in 1699) a pension of three hundred pounds a year, that he might be enabled to travel. He staid a year at Blois, probably to learn the French language, and then proceeded in his journey to Italy. While he was travelling, he not only collected his observations on the country, but found time to write his "Dialogues on Medals," and four acts of "Cato." Such is the relation of Tickell. He also wrote in Italy the Letter to Lord Halifax, which is justly considered as the most elegant, if not the most sublime of his poetical productions. But in about two years he found it necessary to hasten home; being, as Swift informs us, distressed by indigence, and compelled to become the Tutor of a travelling Squire.

At his return he published his Travels, with a dedication to Lord Somers.—This book, though awhile neglected, became in time so much the favourite of the public, that before it was reprinted it rose to five times its price. When he came back to England (in 1702) the meanness of his appearance gave testimony of the difficulties to which he had been reduced abroad. His old patrons being out of power, he remained neglected, until the victory at Blenheim (1704) gave him an opportunity to exercise his poetical genius, which he did at the request of Lord Godolphin, and having advanced in the poem no further than the simile of the Angel, he was immediately rewarded by succeeding Mr. Locke in the place of *Commissioner of Appeals*.

In

In the following year he was at Hanover with Lord Halifax; and the year after was made under Secretary of State, first to Sir Charles Hedges, and in a few months more to the Earl of Sunderland. About this time the prevalent taste for Italian Operas inclined him to try what would be the effect of a Musical Drama in our own language. He therefore wrote the "Opera of Rosamond," which, when exhibited on the stage, was either hissed or neglected.—Steele confessed that he owed to him several of the most successful scenes in his comedy of the "Tender Husband." To this play Addison supplied a prologue.

When the Marquis of Wharton was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Addison attended him as his Secretary; and was made Keeper of the Records in Birmingham's Tower, with a salary of three hundred pounds a year. The office was little more than nominal, and the salary was augmented for his accommodation.

When he was in office he made a law to himself, as Swift has recorded, never to remit his regular fees in civility to his friends. "For (said he) I may have a hundred friends; and if my fee be two guineas, I shall by relinquishing my right lose two hundred guineas, and no friend gain more than two: there is therefore no proportion between the good imparted, and the evil suffered."

He was in Ireland when Steele, without any communication of his design, began the publication of the "Tatler;" but he was not long concealed: by inserting a remark on Virgil which Addison had given him, he discovered himself. His first Tatler was published April 22 (1709), and Addison's contribution appeared May 26. To the "Tatler" in about two months succeeded the "Spectator;" a series of Essays of the same kind, but written with less levity, upon a more regular plan, and published daily. It is said by Addison in

in a ſubſequent performance, that theſe two works had a perceptible influence upon the converſation of that time, and taught the frolick and the gay to unite merriment with decency; an effect which they can never wholly loſe, while they continue to be among the firſt books by which both ſexes are initiated in the elegancies of knowledge.

The next year (1713), in which "Cato" came upon the ſtage, was the grand climacterick of Addiſon's reputation. The whole nation was at that time on fire with faction. The Whigs applauded every line in which liberty was mentioned, as a ſatire on the Tories; and the Tories echoed every clap, to ſhew that the ſatire was unfelt. The play, ſupported thus by the emulation of factious praiſe, was acted night after night for a longer time than it is thought the public had allowed to any drama before; and the Author, as Mrs. Porter related, wandered through the whole exhibition behind the ſcenes with reſtleſs and unappeaſable ſolicitude.

While "Cato" was upon the ſtage, another daily paper called the "Guardian" was publiſhed by Steele. To this Addiſon gave great aſſiſtance, whether occaſionally, or by previous engagement, is not known. The papers of Addiſon are marked in the "Spectator" by one of the letters in the name of *Clio*, and in the "Guardian" *by a hand*. It was not ſuppoſed that he had tried a Comedy on the ſtage, till Steele, after his death, declared him the Author of the "Drummer:" This however he did not know to be true by any cogent teſtimony, for when Addiſon put the play into his hands, he only told him it was the work of a *Gentleman in the Company*.—The total ſilence of any other claimant has determined the public to aſſign it to Addiſon, and it is now printed with his other poetry. Steele carried it to the play-houſe, afterwards to the preſs,

preſs, and ſold the copy for fifty guineas. It was received on the ſtage with cold approbation.

He was not all this time an indifferent ſpectator of publick affairs. He wrote, as different exigencies required (in 1707), "The preſent State of the War, and the neceſſity of an Augmentation." He publiſhed alſo the few papers entitled "The Whig Examiner;" and it muſt be admitted, that on no occaſion was the genius of Addiſon more vigorouſly exerted, and on none did the ſuperiority of his wit more evidently appear. His "Trial of Count Tariff," written to expoſe the treaty of Commerce with France, lived longer than the queſtion that produced it.

Not long afterwards an attempt was made to revive the "Spectator," and eighty numbers only appeared---Theſe were collected into an eighth volume, perhaps more valuable than any one of thoſe that went before it---Addiſon produced more than a fourth part. The "Spectator" from its recommencement was publiſhed only three times a week. To Addiſon, Tickell has aſcribed twenty-three papers *.

When the Houſe of Hanover took poſſeſſion of the throne, it was reaſonable to expect that the zeal of Addiſon would be ſeaſonably rewarded. Before the arrival of King George he was made Secretary to the Regency, and was required by his Office to ſend notice to Hanover, that the Queen was dead, and that the throne was vacant. He was ſo overwhelmed with the greatneſs of the event, and ſo diſtracted by choice of expreſſion, that the Lords, who could not wait for the niceties of criticiſm, called Mr. Southwell, a Clerk in the Houſe, and ordered him to diſpatch the meſſage. Southwell readily told what was neceſſary, in the common ſtyle of buſineſs, and valued

* Numb. 556. 557. 558. 559. 561. 562. 565. 567. 568. 569. 571. 574. 575. 579. 580. 582. 583. 584. 585. 590. 592. 598. 600.

himſelf

himſelf upon having done what was too hard for Addiſon.

He was better qualified for the "Freeholder," a paper which he publiſhed twice a week, from December 23, 1715, to the middle of the next year.

Auguſt 2, 1716, he married the Counteſs Dowager of Warwick, whom he had ſolicited by a very long courtſhip.—He is ſaid to have firſt known her by becoming Tutor to her ſon—The marriage, it is ſaid, made no addition to his happineſs. She always remembered her own rank, and thought herſelf entitled to treat with very little ceremony her Son's Preceptor. Rowe's ballad of the "Deſpairing Shepherd" is ſaid to have been written, either before or after marriage, upon this memorable pair.

The year after (1717) he roſe to his higheſt elevation, being made Secretary of State—He was however unequal to the duties of his Office In the Houſe of Commons he could not ſpeak, and therefore was uſeleſs to the defence of the Government. In the office, ſays Pope, he could not iſſue an order without loſing his time in queſt of fine expreſſions. Feeling by experience his own inability, he was at laſt forced to ſolicit his diſmiſſion with a penſion of 1500l. a year. It was given out by his friends, that this relinquiſhment was in conſequence of declining health.

He now began to plan literary occupations for his future life. He purpoſed a tragedy on the death of Socrates; but he engaged in a nobler work, "A Defence of the Chriſtian Religion," of which part was publiſhed after his death; and he deſigned to have made a new poetical verſion of the Pſalms. It is related, that he had once a deſign to make an Engliſh Dictionary, and that he conſidered Dr. Tillotſon as the writer of higheſt authority.

Addiſon however did not conclude his life in peaceful ſtudies; but relapſed, when he was near his end;

to

to a political queſtion. It ſo happened that (1718, 19) a controverſy was agitated with great vehemence between him and Steele, two friends of long continuance. The ſubject of their diſpute was of great importance. The Earl of Sunderland propoſed an act called the "Peerage Bill," by which the number of Peers ſhould be fixed, and the King reſtrained from any new creation of Nobility, unleſs when an old family ſhould be extinct—The bill was naturally oppoſed in the Commons, who were not likely to approve the perpetual excluſion of themſelves and their poſterity. Steele became their advocate, and publiſhed a pamphlet called the "Plebeian;" to this an anſwer appeared by Addiſon, under the title of the "Old Whig." Some perſonal invectives paſſed between them in the diſpute, that cauſed theſe illuſtrious friends finally to part in acrimonious oppoſition.

The end of Addiſon's uſeful life was now approaching—He had for ſome time been oppreſſed by ſhortneſs of breath, which was now aggravated by a dropſy—During this lingering decay, he ſent, as Pope relates, a meſſage by the Earl of Warwick to Mr. Gay, deſiring to ſee him: Gay, who had not viſited him for ſome time before, obeyed the ſummons, and found himſelf received with great kindneſs. Addiſon told him, that he had injured him; but that if he recovered, he would recompenſe him. What the injury was, he did not explain, nor did Gay ever know; but ſuppoſed that ſome preferment deſigned for him had by Addiſon's intervention been withheld.

When he found his life near its end he directed Lord Warwick, a young man of very irregular life, to be called; and when he deſired with great tenderneſs to hear his laſt injunctions, told him, *I have ſent for you that you may ſee how a Chriſtian can die.* What effect this awful ſcene had on the Earl is not known; he died himſelf in a ſhort time. Having given directions to

Mr.

Mr. Tickell for the publication of his works, and dedicated them on his death-bed to his friend Mr. Craggs, he died June 17, 1719, at Holland Houſe, leaving no child but a daughter.

"Of the virtue of Addiſon it is ſufficient teſtimony, that the reſentment of party has tranſmitted no charge of any crime. He was not one of thoſe who are praiſed only after death; for his merit was ſo generally acknowledged, that Swift, having obſerved that his election paſſed without a conteſt, adds, that if he had propoſed himſelf for King he could hardly have been refuſed."

"Of his habits or external manners nothing is ſo often mentioned as that timorous or ſullen taciturnity, which his friends called modeſty by too mild a name. Steele mentions with great tenderneſs, that remarkable baſhfulneſs, which is a cloak that hides and muffles merit; and tells us, that his abilities were covered only by modeſty, which doubles the beauties which are ſeen, and gives credit and eſteem to all that are concealed—Cheſterfield affirms, that Addiſon was the moſt timorous and aukward man that he ever ſaw. And Addiſon, ſpeaking of his own deficiency in converſation, uſed to ſay of himſelf, that, with reſpect to intellectual wealth, he could draw bills for a thouſand pounds, though he had not a Guinea in his pocket."

Johnſon's opinion ſeems to be, that Lord Cheſterfield's repreſentation was hyperbolical, although he acknowledges that Addiſon was oppreſſed by an improper and ungraceful timidity.

"The time in which he lived had reaſon to lament his obſtinacy of ſilence; for he was, ſays Steele, above all men in that talent called humour, and enjoyed it in ſuch perfection, that I have often reflected, after a night ſpent with him apart from all the world, that I had the pleaſure of converſing with an intimate acquaintance of Terence and Catullus, who had all their wit and nature heightened with humour more exquiſite and delightful

ful than any other man ever poſſeſſed. This is the fondneſs of a friend; let us hear what is told us by a rival. Addiſon's converſation, ſays Pope, had ſomething in it more charming than I have found in any other man. But this was only when familiar; before ſtrangers, or perhaps a ſingle ſtranger, he preſerved his dignity by a ſtiff ſilence."

"His own powers were ſuch as might have ſatisfied him with conſcious excellence. Of very extenſive learning he has indeed given us no proofs. He ſeems to have had ſmall acquaintance with the ſciences, and to have read little except Latin and French; but of Latin poets his "Dialogues on Medals" ſhew that he had peruſed the works with great diligence and ſkill. The abundance of his own mind left him little need of adventitious ſentiments; his wit always could ſuggeſt what the occaſion demanded. He had read with critical eyes the important volume of human life, and knew the heart of man from the depths of ſtratagem to the ſurface of affection.

"What he knew, he could eaſily communicate. This, ſays Steele, was particular in this writer, that when he had taken his reſolution, or made his plan for what he deſigned to write, he would walk about a room, and dictate it into language with as much freedom and eaſe as any one could write it down, and attend to the coherence and grammar of what he dictated."

"Of the courſe of Addiſon's familiar day before his marriage, Pope has given a detail. He had in the houſe with him Budgell, and perhaps Philips. His chief companions were Steele, Budgell, Philips, Carey, Davenant, and Colonel Brett. With one or other of theſe he always breakfaſted. He ſtudied all morning; then dined at a tavern, and went afterwards to Button's.

"Button had been a ſervant in the Counteſs of Warwick's family, who under the patronage of Addiſon

ſon kept a coffee-houſe on the ſouth ſide of Ruſſell Street, about two doors from Covent Garden. Here it was that the wits of that time uſed to aſſemble. It is ſaid, that when Addiſon had ſuffered any vexation from the Counteſs, he withdrew the company from Button's houſe.

"From the coffee-houſe he went again to a tavern, where he often ſat late, and drank too much wine. In the bottle diſcontent ſeeks for comfort, cowardice for courage, and baſhfulneſs for confidence. It is not unlikely, that Addiſon was firſt ſeduced to exceſs by the manumiſſion which he obtained from the ſervile timidity of his ſober hours.

"As a writer," ſays Dr. Johnſon, "his poetry is firſt to be conſidered; of which it muſt be confeſſed, that it has not often thoſe felicities of diction which give luſtre to ſentiments, or that vigor of ſentiment that animates diction: there is little of ardour, vehemence or tranſport; there is very rarely the awfulneſs of grandeur, and not very often the ſplendour of elegance. He thinks juſtly; but he thinks faintly. This is his general character, to which doubtleſs many ſingle paſſages will furniſh exceptions.

"Yet if he ſeldom reaches ſupreme excellence, he rarely ſinks into dullneſs, and is ſtill more rarely entangled in abſurdity. He did not truſt his powers enough to be negligent. There is in moſt of his compoſitions a coolneſs and equability, deliberate and cautious, ſometimes with little that delights, but ſeldom with any thing that offends."

Johnſon ſpeaks thus of Addiſon's "Letter from Italy" and the "Campaign."

"The Letter from Italy has been always praiſed, but has never been praiſed beyond its merit. It is more correct with leſs appearance of labour, and more elegant, with leſs ambition of ornament, than other of his

his poems. There is however one broken metaphor, of which notice may properly be taken:

> Fir'd with that name——
> I bridle in my ſtruggling muſe with pain,
> That longs to launch into a nobler ſtrain.

"To *bridle* a *Goddeſs* is no very delicate idea; but why muſt ſhe be *bridled?* becauſe ſhe *longs* to *launch*; an act which was never hindered by a *bridle:* and whither will ſhe *launch?* into a *nobler ſtrain.* She is in the firſt line a *horſe*, in the ſecond a *boat*; and the care of the poet is to keep his *horſe* or his *boat* from *ſinging.*

"The next compoſition is the far-famed "Campaign," which Dr. Warton has termed a "Gazette in Rhyme," with a harſhneſs not often uſed by the good nature of his criticiſm. Before a cenſure ſo ſevere is admitted, let us conſider that war is a frequent ſubject of poetry, and then enquire who has deſcribed it with more juſtneſs and force. Many of our own writers tried their powers upon this year of victory, yet Addiſon's is confeſſedly the beſt performance; his poem is the work of a man not blinded by the duſt of learning: his images are not borrowed merely from books. The ſuperiority which he confers upon his hero is not perſonal proweſs, and *mighty bone*, but deliberate intrepidity, a calm command of his paſſions, and the power of conſulting his own mind in the midſt of danger. The rejection and contempt of fiction is rational and manly.

"It may be obſerved, that the laſt line is imitated by Pope;

> Marlb'rough's exploits appear divinely bright——
> Rais'd of themſelves, their genuine charms they boaſt,
> And thoſe that paint them trueſt, praiſe them moſt.

" This Pope had in his thoughts, but not knowing how to uſe what was not his own he ſpoiled the thought when he had borrowed it:

> The well-ſung woes ſhall ſoothe my penſive ghoſt;
> He beſt can paint them who ſhall feel them moſt.

" Martial exploits may be *painted*; perhaps *woes* may be *painted*; but they are ſurely not *painted* by being *well ſung*: it is not eaſy to paint in ſong, or to ſing in colours.

" No paſſage in the " Campaign" has been more often mentioned than the ſimile of the Angel, which is ſaid in the " Tatler" to be *one of the nobleſt thoughts that ever entered into the heart of man.*"

Johnſon then goes on to prove, that it is not a ſimile but merely an exemplification. He concludes what he ſays of this poem, by giving what Dr. Madden once repeated to him—

If I had ſet, ſaid he, *ten ſchoolboys to write on the battle of Blenheim, and eight had brought me the Angel, I ſhould not have been ſurpriſed.*

After placing the " Opera of Roſamond" among the firſt of Addiſon's compoſitions, he comes to the Tragedy of " Cato," which he ſays

" ——— is unqueſtionably the nobleſt production of Addiſon's genius. Of a work ſo much read, it is difficult to ſay any thing new. About things on which the publick think long, it commonly attains to think right; and of " Cato" it has not been unjuſtly determined, that it is rather a poem in dialogue than a Drama, rather a ſucceſſion of juſt ſentiments in elegant language, than a repreſentation of natural affections, or of any ſtate probable or poſſible in human life. Nothing here *excites or aſſuages emotion; here is no magical power of raiſing phantaſtick terror or wild anxiety.* The events are expected without ſolicitude, and are remembered

remembered without joy or sorrow. Of the Agents we have no care; we consider not what they are doing, or what they are suffering; we wish only to know what they have to say. Cato is a being above our solicitude; a man of whom the Gods take care, and whom we leave to their care with heedless confidence. To the rest neither Gods nor men can have much attention: for there is not one amongst them that strongly attracts either affection or esteem. But they are made the vehicles of such sentiments and such expression, that there is scarcely a scene in the play which the reader does not wish to impress upon his memory.

"When "Cato", was shewn to Pope, he advised the Author to print it without any theatrical exhibition, supposing it would be read more favourably than heard. Addison declared himself of the same opinion; but urged the importunity of his friends for its appearance on the stage. The emulation of parties made it successful beyond expectation, and its success has introduced or confirmed among us the use of dialogue too declamatory, of unaffecting elegance, and chill philanthropy."

Of Addison as a translator Johnson says—"His translations, so far as I have compared them, want the exactness of a Scholar. That he understood his Authors cannot be doubted; but his versions will not teach others to understand them, being too licentiously paraphrastical. They are however, for the most part, smooth and easy; and, what is the first excellence of a translator, such as may be read with pleasure by those who do not know the original."

"In general his poetry is polished and pure; the product of a mind too judicious to commit faults, but not sufficiently vigorous to attain excellence. He has sometimes a striking line, or a shining paragraph; but on the whole he is warm rather than fervid, and shews

more dexterity than ſtrength. He was however one of our earlieſt examples of correctneſs.

"The verſification which he has learned from Dryden, he debaſed rather than refined. His rhymes are often diſſonant; in his Georgick he admits broken lines. He uſes both Triplets and Alexandrines, but Triplets more frequently in his tranſlations than his other works. The mere ſtructure of verſes ſeems never to have engaged much of his care. But his lines are very ſmooth in "Roſamond" and too ſmooth in "Cato."

"His proſe is the model of the middle ſtile; on grave ſubjects not formal, on light occaſions not grovelling; pure without ſcrupuloſity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable, and always eaſy, without glowing words or pointed ſentences. Addiſon never deviated from his track to ſnatch a grace; he ſeeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected ſplendour.

"It ſeems to have been his principal endeavour to avoid all harſhneſs and ſeverity of diction; he is therefore ſomething verboſe in his tranſitions and connections, and ſometimes deſcends too much to the language of converſation; yet if his language had been leſs idiomatical, it might have loſt ſomewhat of its genuine angliciſm. What he attempted, he performed; he is never feeble, and he did not wiſh to be energetick; he is never rapid, and never ſtagnates. His ſentences have neither ſtudied amplitude, nor affected brevity; his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and eaſy. Whoever wiſhes to attain an Engliſh ſtile, familiar but not coarſe, and elegant but not oſtentatious, muſt give his days and nights to the volumes of Addiſon."

BLACKMORE

BLACKMORE.

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE was the ſon of Robert Blackmore, of Corſham in Wiltſhire, ſuppoſed to have been an Attorney. Having been for ſome time educated in a Country School, he was ſent at thirteen to Weſtminſter; and in 1668 was entered at Edmund-hall in Oxford, where he took the degree of M. A. June 3, 1676, and reſided thirteen years; a much longer time than is uſual to ſpend at the Univerſity. He afterwards travelled: at Padua, he was made Doctor of Phyſick; and having wandered about a year and a half on the Continent, returned home.

In ſome part of his life, though it is not known when, his indigence compelled him to teach a ſchool, and afterwards, having ſtudied Phyſick for ſome time, he commenced Phyſician, and obtained high eminence and extenſive practice. He became Fellow of the College of Phyſicians, April 12, 1687.—His reſidence was in Cheapſide, and his friends were chiefly in the City. He was therefore made a poet not by neceſſity but inclination, and was not known as a maker of verſes till he publiſhed (in 1668) "Prince Arthur," an heroick poem in ten books, written, as he relates, *by ſuch catches and ſtarts, and in ſuch occaſional uncertain hours as his profeſſion afforded, and for the greateſt part in Coffee-Houſes, or in paſſing up and down the ſtreets.*

That this work found many readers is certain; for in two years it had three editions, a very uncommon inſtance of favourable reception, at a time when literary curioſity was yet confined to particular claſſes of the nation. In 1697 it appeared in twelve books inſtead of ten; and in the ſame year, he was made one

of the Phyſicians in ordinary to King William, and advanced by him to the honour of Knighthood, with a preſent of a gold chain and a medal.

His ardour of poetry ſtill continued; and in 1700 he publiſhed a "Paraphraſe on the Book of Job," and other parts of the ſcripture. The ſame year he gave to the world a "Satire on Wit;" a proclamation of defiance to his rivals, that united almoſt all the poets againſt him, and which brought upon him lampoons and ridicule from every ſide. In 1705 he publiſhed "Eliza" in ten books, another heroick poem.

From this period he turned ſome of his thoughts to the celebration of living characters; he wrote a poem on the "Kit-cat Club," and "Advice to the Poets how to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough." Some conſiderable time after the poem of "Advice to a Weaver of Tapeſtry" appeared, which Steele, in the Tatler, treats with the utmoſt contempt.

In 1712 he publiſhed "Creation, a Philoſophical Poem." Addiſon gives it the higheſt praiſe in the 339th Number of the Spectator. Dennis calls it "a Philoſophical Poem, which has equalled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its verſification, and infinitely ſurpaſſed it in the ſolidity and ſtrength of its reaſoning."

This poem, if he had not written any thing elſe, would have tranſmitted him to poſterity among the firſt favourites of the Engliſh muſe.

When the "Spectator" ſtopped, he conſidered the polite world as deſtitute of entertainment; and in concert with Mr. Hughes, who wrote every third paper, publiſhed three times a week the "Lay Monaſtery." This undertaking proceeded no further than to forty papers, which was afterwards collected into a volume, and called in the title a "Sequel to the Spectators."

Some years afterwards (1716 and 1717) he publiſhed two volumes of "Eſſays in Proſe." In Auguſt 22, 1716, he

he became one of the *Elects* of the College of Phyſicians, and was ſoon after (October 1) choſen Cenſor.

He now began to think that his poem on "Creation" would be imperfect, unleſs he likewiſe enforced the truth of Revelation; and for that purpoſe added another poem on "Redemption." He had likewiſe written before his "Creation" three books on the "Nature of Man."

In 1721 he produced a "New Verſion of the Pſalms of David fitted to the Tunes uſed in the Churches," which, being recommended by the archbiſhops and many biſhops, obtained a licence for its admiſſion into publick worſhip; but no admiſſion has it yet obtained, nor has it any right to come where *Brady* and *Tate* have got poſſeſſion.

He now again turned his mind to heroick poetry, and produced "Alfred" in 1723, an epick poem of twelve books. It did not however add much to his reputation, and is by this time quite forgotten. He wrote ſeveral treatiſes on phyſick, and alſo engaged himſelf in theological controverſy, but the books which he publiſhed on thoſe ſubjects are now not much noticed. He died on the eighth of October 1729.

"As a writer," Johnſon ſays, "Blackmore depended with great ſecurity on his own powers, and perhaps was for that reaſon leſs diligent in peruſing books. "His literature was, I think, but ſmall. What he knew of antiquity, I ſuſpect him to have gathered from modern compilers: but though he could not boaſt of much critical knowledge, his mind was ſtored with general principles, and he left minute reſearches to thoſe whom he conſidered as little minds.

"With this diſpoſition he wrote moſt of his poems. Having formed a magnificent deſign, he was careleſs of particular and ſubordinate elegancies; he ſtudied no niceties of verſification; he waited for no felicities of fancy; but caught his firſt thoughts in the

firſt words in which they were preſented: nor does it appear that he ſaw beyond his own performances, or had even elevated his mind to that ideal perfection which every genius born to excel is condemned always to purſue, and never overtake. In the firſt ſuggeſtions of his imagination he acquieſced; he thought them good, and did not ſeek for better.

"The poem on "Creation" has, however, the appearance of more circumſpection; it wants neither harmony of numbers, accuracy of thought, nor elegance of diction: it has either been written with great care, or, what cannot be imagined of ſo long a work, with ſuch felicity as made care leſs neceſſary.

"Its two conſtituent parts are ratiocination and deſcription. To reaſon in verſe is ſaid to be difficult; but Blackmore not only reaſons in verſe, but very often reaſons poetically; and finds the art of uniting ornament with ſtrength, and eaſe with cloſeneſs. This is a ſkill which Pope might have condeſcended to learn from him, when he needed it ſo much in his Moral Eſſays.

"In his deſcriptions, both of life and nature, the poet and the philoſopher happily co-operate; truth is recommended by elegance, and elegance ſuſtained by truth.

"In the ſtructure and order of the poem not only the greater parts are properly conſecutive, but the didactick and illuſtrative paragraphs are ſo happily mingled, that labour is relieved by pleaſure, and the attention is led on through a long ſucceſſion of varied excellence to the original poſition, the fundamental principle of wiſdom and virtue."

SHEF-

SHEFFIELD,

DUKE OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

JOHN SHEFFIELD, deſcended from a long ſeries of illuſtrious anceſtors, was born in 1649, the ſon of Edmund Earl of Mulgrave, who died 1658. The young lord was put into the hands of a tutor, with whom he was ſo little ſatisfied, that he got rid of him in a ſhort time, and at an age not exceeding twelve years reſolved to educate himſelf.

When war was declared againſt the Dutch, he went at ſeventeen on board the ſhip in which Prince Rupert and the Duke of Albemarle ſailed, with the command of the fleet; but by contrariety of winds they were reſtrained from action. His zeal for the king's ſervice was recompenſed by the command of one of the independent troops of horſe, then raiſed to protect the coaſt. Next year he received a ſummons to parliament, which, as he was then but eighteen, the Earl of Northumberland cenſured as at leaſt indecent, and his objection was allowed.

When another Dutch war (1672) broke out, he went again a volunteer in the ſhip which the celebrated Lord Oſſory commanded. His behaviour was ſo favourably repreſented by his lordſhip, that he was advanced to the command of the Katherine, the beſt ſecond rate ſhip in the navy. He afterwards raiſed a regiment of foot, and commanded it as a colonel. The land forces were ſent aſhore by Prince Rupert; and he lived in the camp very familiarly with Schomberg. He was then appointed colonel of the old Holland regiment, together with his own; and having

obtained a Garter in his twenty-fifth year, he was afterwards made gentleman of the bedchamber.

He next went into the French ſervice to learn the art of war under Turenne, but ſtaid only a ſhort time. The lieutenancy of Yorkſhire and the government of Hull were afterwards preſented to him.

Thus rapidly did he make his way both to military and civil honours and employments; yet, buſy as he was, he did not neglect his ſtudies, but at leaſt cultivated poetry, in which he was very early uncommonly ſkillful.

The Moors having beſieged Tangier he was ſent (1680) with two thouſand men to its relief. His voyage was proſperouſly performed in three weeks, and the Moors, without a conteſt, retired before him.

In this voyage he compoſed the "Viſion," a licentious poem, ſuch as was faſhionable in thoſe times, with little power of invention, or propriety of ſentiment.

At the ſucceſſion of King James, he was immediately admitted into the privy council, and made Lord Chamberlain. He accepted a place in the high commiſſion, without knowledge, as he declared after the Revolution, of its illegality.

Although he acquieſced in the Revolution, ſtill he lived ſome years after without employment. It is ſaid he looked on King William with malevolence, and, if his verſes or his proſe may be credited, with contempt. he was, notwithſtanding this averſion or indifference, made Marquis of Normandy (1694), but ſtill oppoſed the court on ſome important queſtions; yet at laſt he was received into the cabinet council, with a penſion of three thouſand pounds*.

At

* In the quarto edition of the works of this nobleman, there is an unfiniſhed relation of the Revolution in 1688, which contains ſome very curious particulars as far as they go. His Grace was one of the laſt

At the acceſſion of Queen Anne, whom he is ſaid to have courted when they were both young, he was highly favoured. Before her coronation (1702) ſhe made him Lord Privy Seal, and ſoon after Lord Lieutenant of the north riding of Yorkſhire. He was then named Commiſſioner for treating with the Scots about the Union; and was made next year firſt Duke of Normandy, and then of Buckinghamſhire.

Soon after, becoming jealous of the Duke of Marlborough, he reſigned the privy ſeal, and joined the diſcontented Tories in a motion extremely offenſive to the queen, for inviting the Princeſs Sophia to England. The queen courted him back with an offer no leſs than the Chancellorſhip, which he refuſed. He then retired from buſineſs, and built the houſe in the park, which is now the queen's, upon ground granted by the crown.

When the miniſtry was changed (1710) he was made Lord Chamberlain of the Houſehold, and concurred in all the tranſactions of that time, except that he endeavoured to protect the Catalans. After the queen's death, he became a conſtant opponent of the court, and, having no publick buſineſs, is ſuppoſed to have amuſed himſelf by writing his two tragedies. He died February 24, 1720-21.

He was thrice married.—His laſt, the daughter of King James by the Counteſs of Dorcheſter, and the widow of the Earl of Angleſey, was the only one that produced him children, who, however, all died.

"Buckingham's character is not to be propoſed as worthy of imitation. His religion he may be ſup-

laſt noblemen that quitted his old maſter James the Second, and replied very nobly to King William, who aſked him how he would have behaved if he had been made privy to the deſign of bringing in the Prince of Orange? "Sir, I ſhould have diſcovered it to the king whom I then ſerved." "I ſhould not then, Sir, have blamed you," was the honourable anſwer of William.

SEWARD's ANECDOTES, Vol. II. p. 133.

poſed to have learned from Hobbes, and his morality was ſuch as naturally proceeds from looſe opinions. His ſentiments with reſpect to women he picked up in the court of Charles, and his principles concerning property were ſuch as a gaming-table ſupplies. He was cenſured as covetous, and has been defended by an inattention to his affairs, as if a man might not at once be corrupted by avarice and idleneſs. He is ſaid however to have had much tenderneſs, and to have been very ready to apologize for his violences of paſſion."

Dr. Johnſon conſiders him as "a writer that ſometimes glimmers, but rarely ſhines, feebly laborious, and at beſt but pretty. His ſongs are upon common topicks; he hopes, and grieves, and repents, and deſpairs, and rejoices, like any other maker of little ſtanzas; to be great he hardly tries; to be gay is hardly in his power."

"His "Eſſay on Poetry" is the great work, for which he was praiſed by Roſcommon, Dryden, and Pope, and doubtleſs by many more whoſe eulogies have periſhed.

"Of this eſſay, which Dryden has exalted ſo highly, it may be juſtly ſaid, that the precepts are judicious, ſometimes new, and often happily expreſſed; but there are, after all the emendations, many weak lines, and ſome ſtrange appearances of negligence."

"His verſes are often inſipid; but his memoirs are lively and agreeable; he had the perſpicuity and elegance of an hiſtorian, but not the fire and fancy of a poet."

GRANVILLE.

GRANVILLE.

GEORGE GRANVILLE, or as others write *Greenville* or *Grenville*, afterwards Lord Landidown of Biddeford in the county of Devon, was born about 1667, the ſon of Bernard Greenville, who was entruſted by Monk with the moſt private tranſactions of the Reſtoration, and the grandſon of Sir Bevil Greenville, who died in the king's cauſe, at the battle of Landdown.

Before the age of twelve he was ſent to Cambridge, where he pronounced a copy of his own verſes to the Princeſs Mary D'Eſte of Modena, then Ducheſs of York, when ſhe viſited the Univerſity.

At the acceſſion of King James, being only eighteen, he again exerted his poetical powers, and addreſſed the new monarch in three ſhort pieces of not much merit.

It was probably about this time that he wrote the "Poem to the Earl of Peterborough."

Through the whole reign of King William he is ſuppoſed to have lived in literary retirement, and indeed had for ſome time few other pleaſures but thoſe of ſtudy in his power. He was the younger ſon of a younger brother; a denomination by which our anceſtors proverbially expreſſed the loweſt ſtate of penury and dependance.

About this time he became enamoured of the Counteſs of Newburgh, whom he has celebrated with ſo much ardour by the name of Mira. In the time of his retirement it is probably that he compoſed his dramatick pieces, the "She-Gallants" (acted 1696) which he reviſed and called "Once a Lover and always a Lover;" "The Jew of Venice" altered from Shakeſpeare's Merchant of Venice (1701); "Heroick Love," a tragedy;

tragedy (1698); "The Britiſh Enchanters" (1706) a dramatick poem; and "Peleus and Thetis," a maſque, written to accompany "The Jew of Venice."

At the acceſſion of Queen Anne, having his fortune improved by bequeſts from his father, and his uncle the Earl of Bathe, he was choſen into Parliament for Fowey. He ſoon after engaged in a joint tranſlation of the "Invectives againſt Philip," with a deſign, ſurely weak and puerile, of turning the thunder of Demoſthenes upon the head of Lewis.

He afterwards (in 1706) had his eſtate augmented by an inheritance from his elder brother, Sir Bevil Granville, who died at ſea. He continued to ſerve in parliament, and in the ninth year of Queen Anne was choſen knight of the ſhire for Cornwall.

At the memorable change of the miniſtry (1710) he was made Secretary at War, in the place of Sir Robert Walpole.

Next year the violence of party made twelve peers in a day; Mr. Granville became Lord Landſdowne Baron Biddeford. Being high in the queen's favour, he (1712) was appointed Comptroller of the Houſehold, and a Privy Counſellor; and to his other honours was added the dedication of Pope's "Windſor Foreſt." He was advanced next year to be Treaſurer of the Houſehold.

Of theſe favours he ſoon loſt all but his title; for at the acceſſion of King George his place was given to the Earl Cholmondeley, and he was perſecuted with the reſt of his party.—He was, after the inſurrection in Scotland, ſeized September 26, 1715, as a ſuſpected man, and confined in the Tower till February 8, 1717, when he was at laſt releaſed, and reſtored to his ſeat in Parliament.

Some time afterwards (about 1722) he went into foreign countries. In this ſtate of leiſure and retirement, he received the firſt volume of Burnet's Hiſtory, and anſwered ſome calumnies in it levelled againſt General

General Monk. His other hiſtorical performance is a defence of his relation Sir Richard Greenville. Theſe pieces were publiſhed at his return to England.

He was now kindly received at court by Queen Caroline; to whom and to the Princeſs Anne he preſented his works elegantly bound, with verſes on the blank leaves, with which he concluded his poetical labours.

He died in Hanover Square, January 30, 1735, having a few days before buried his wife, the Lady Anne Villiers, widow to Mr. Thynne, by whom he had four daughters, but no ſon.

"His works do not ſhew him to have had much comprehenſion from nature or illumination from learning. He ſeems to have had no ambition above the imitation of Waller, of whom he has copied the faults, and very little more.

"His little pieces are ſeldom either ſprightly or elegant, either keen or weighty. They are trifles written by idleneſs, and publiſhed by vanity. But his Prologues and Epilogues have a juſt claim to praiſe.

"In his "Britiſh Enchanters" he has bidden defiance to all chronology, by confounding the inconſiſtent manners of different ages; but the dialogue has often the air of Dryden's rhyming plays; and the ſongs are lively, though not very correct. This is, I think, far the beſt of his works; for if it has many faults, it has likewiſe paſſages which are at leaſt pretty, though they do not riſe to any high degree of excellence."

ROWE.

NICHOLAS ROWE was born at Little Beckford in Bedfordſhire in 1673. His family had long poſſeſſed a conſiderable eſtate with a good houſe at Lambertoun

Lambertoun in Devonſhire. His father John Rowe, who was the firſt that quitted his paternal acres to practiſe any art of profit, profeſſed the law, and publiſhed "Barlow's and Dalliſon's Reports" in the reign of James the ſecond. He was made Serjeant, and died April 30, 1692. He was buried in the Temple Church.

Nicholas was firſt ſent to a private ſchool at Highgate; and, being afterwards removed to Weſtminſter, was at twelve years of age choſen one of the King's Scholars. His exerciſes in ſeveral languages are ſaid to have been written with uncommon degrees of excellence, and yet to have coſt him very little labour.

At ſixteen he was entered a ſtudent of the Middle Temple, but from the age of nineteen, the time his father died, it is thought he ſuffered law gradually to give way to poetry. At twenty-five he produced the "Ambitious Stepmother," which was received with ſo much favour, that he devoted himſelf from that time wholly to the more elegant parts of writing.

His next tragedy (1702) was "Tamerlane," in which, under the name of Tamerlane, he intended to characteriſe King William, and Lewis the fourteenth under that of Bajazet. This was the tragedy which Rowe valued moſt.

The "Fair Penitent," his next production (1703), is one of the moſt pleaſing tragedies on the ſtage, where it ſtill keeps its turn of appearing, and probably will long keep them, for there is ſcarcely any work of any poet at once ſo intereſting by the fable and ſo delightful by the language.

As Dr. Johnſon particularly points out this play as one of the beſt on the Engliſh ſtage, we ſhall make room for his entire criticiſm upon it.

"The ſtory is domeſtick, and therefore eaſily received by the imagination and aſſimilated to common life; the diction is exquiſitely harmonious, and ſoft or ſprightly as occaſion requires.

"The

"The character of *Lothario* ſeems to have been expanded by Richardſon into *Lovelace*; but he has excelled his original in the moral effect of the fiction. *Lothario* with gaiety which cannot be hated, and bravery which cannot be deſpiſed, retains too much of the Spectator's kindneſs. It was in the power of Richardſon alone to teach us at once eſteem and deteſtation, to make virtuous reſentment overpower all the benevolence which wit, and elegance, and courage, naturally excite, and loſe at laſt the Hero in the Villain.

"The fifth act is not equal to the former; the events of the Drama are exhauſted, and little remains but to talk of what is paſt. It has been obſerved, that the title of the play does not ſufficiently correſpond with the behaviour of Califta, who at laſt ſhews no evident ſigns of repentance, but may be reaſonably ſuſpected of feeling pain from detection rather than from guilt, and expreſſes more ſhame than ſorrow, and more rage than ſhame."

His next play (1706) was "Ulyſſes," which is now neglected, as is alſo the "Royal Convert" which appeared in 1708. He once ventured on a Comedy, and produced the "Biter" (1706); but finding the little ſucceſs it had, he tried at lighter ſcenes no more.

After the "Royal Convert" appeared (1714) "Jane Shore," written, as its Author profeſſes, *in imitation of Shakeſpeare's ſtile.* Johnſon denies that it in the leaſt reſembles Shakeſpeare's manner of writing; but ſays,

"This play, conſiſting chiefly of domeſtick ſcenes and private diſtreſs, lays hold upon the heart. The wife is forgiven becauſe ſhe repents, and the huſband is honoured becauſe he forgives. This therefore is one of thoſe pieces which we ſtill welcome on the ſtage."

His laſt tragedy (1715) was "Lady Jane Grey," but it has now ſunk into oblivion. From this time he gave nothing more to the Stage.

In

In 1709 he undertook an edition of Shakeſpeare's Works, from which he did not receive much additional fame. Being Under Secretary for three years, when the Duke of Queenſberry was Secretary of State, he afterwards applied to the Earl of Oxford for ſome publick employment. Oxford enjoined him to ſtudy Spaniſh, and when ſome time afterwards he came again, and ſaid he had maſtered it, the Earl diſmiſſed him with this congratulation, "Then, Sir, I envy you the pleaſure of reading "Don Quixotte" in the original."

At the acceſſion of King George the firſt he was made Poet-laureat, it is ſaid, by the ejection of poor Nahum Tate, who (1716) died in the Mint, where he was forced to ſeek ſhelter for extreme poverty. He was made likewiſe one of the Land Surveyors of the Cuſtoms of the Port of London. The Prince of Wales choſe him Clerk of his council; and the Lord Chancellor Parker, as ſoon as he received the ſeals, appointed him, unaſked, Secretary of the Preſentations.

Having already tranſlated ſome parts of "Lucan's Pharſalia," he undertook a verſion of the whole work, which he lived to finiſh, but not to publiſh. It ſeems to have been printed under the care of Dr. Welwood. Rowe died the 6th of December 1718, in the forty-fifth year of his age. He was buried in Weſtminſter Abbey.

"Rowe is chiefly to be conſidered as a tragick writer and a tranſlator. In his attempt at Comedy he failed ſo ignominiouſly, that his "Biter" is not inſerted in his works; and his occaſional poems and ſhort compoſitions are rarely worthy of either praiſe or cenſure; for they ſeem the caſual ſports of a mind ſeeking rather to anſwer its leiſure than to exerciſe its power.

——"I know not that there can be found in his plays any deep ſearch into nature, any accurate diſcrimination of kindred qualities, or nice diſplay of paſſion

paſſion in its progreſs; all is general and undefined. Nor does he much intereſt or affect the auditor, except in "Jane Shore," who is always ſeen and heard with pity. Alicia is a character of empty noiſe, with no reſemblance to real ſorrow or to natural madneſs.

"Whence then has Rowe his reputation? From the reaſonableneſs and propriety of ſome of his ſcenes, from the elegance of his diction, and the ſuavity of his verſe. He ſeldom moves either pity or terror, but he often elevates the ſentiments; he ſeldom pierces the breaſt, but he always delights the ear, and often improves the underſtanding.

"His tranſlation of the "Golden Verſes," and of the firſt book of "Quillet's Poem" have nothing in them remarkable. The "Golden Verſes" are tedious. The verſion of "Lucan" is one of the greateſt productions of Engliſh poetry; for there is perhaps none that ſo completely exhibits the genius and ſpirit of the original.—"Lucan" is diſtinguiſhed by a kind of dictatorial or philoſophick dignity, rather, as Quintilian obſerves, declamatory than poetical; full of ambitious morality and pointed ſentences, compriſed in vigorous and animated lines. This character Rowe has very diligently and ſucceſsfully preſerved. His verſification, which is ſuch as his contemporaries practiſed, without any attempt at innovation or improvement, ſeldom wants either melody or force. His Author's ſenſe is ſometimes a little dilated by additional infuſions, and ſometimes weakened by too much expanſion. But ſuch faults are to be expected in all tranſlations, from the conſtraint of meaſures and diſſimilitude of languages. The "Pharſalia" of Rowe deſerves more notice than it obtains, and as it is more read will be more eſteemed."

TICKELL.

TICKELL.

THOMAS TICKELL, the ſon of the Reverend Richard Tickell, was born in 1686 at Bridekirk in Cumberland; and in April 1701 became a member of Queen's College in Oxford; in 1708 he was made Maſter of Arts, and two years afterwards was choſen Fellow; for which, as he did not comply with the ſtatutes by taking orders, he obtained a diſpenſation from the Crown. He held his fellowſhip till 1726, and then vacated it, by marrying, in that year, at Dublin.

He entered early into the world, and was long buſy in publick affairs, in which he was initiated under the patronage of Addiſon, whoſe notice he is ſaid to have gained by his verſes in praiſe of "Roſamond." "Among the innumerable poems of the ſame kind (ſays Johnſon) it will be hard to find one with which they need to fear a compariſon." He produced another piece of the ſame kind at the appearance of "Cato," with equal ſkill, but not equal happineſs.

When the Miniſters of Queen Anne were negotiating with France, Tickell publiſhed "The Proſpect of Peace," a poem; of which the tendency was to reclaim the Nation from the pride of conqueſt to the pleaſures of tranquillity. Addiſon in the "Spectator" ſpeaks of it in the higheſt terms, but Johnſon thought it unequal to the honours which it had received.

At the arrival of King George he ſung the "Royal Progreſs;" but the moſt important poetical incident in his life was his publication of the firſt book of the "Iliad," as tranſlated by himſelf, in apparent oppoſition to "Pope's Homer," of which the firſt part made its entrance into the world at the ſame time. Pope always conſidered Addiſon as the writer of "Tickell's Verſion," with what truth we know not.

When

When the Hanover ſucceſſion was diſputed, Tickell publiſhed his "Letter to Avignon," which ſtands high among party-poems. He was now intimately united to Mr. Addiſon, who, when he went into Ireland as Secretary to the Lord Sunderland, took him thither, and employed him in publick buſineſs, and when afterwards (1717) he roſe to be Secretary of State, made him under Secretary. Their friendſhip ſeems to have continued without abatement; for when Addiſon died, he left him the charge of publiſhing his works, with a ſolemn recommendation to the patronage of Craggs.

To theſe works he prefixed an elegy on the Author ---and Johnſon ſays, that "there is not a more ſublime or more elegant funeral poem to be found in the whole compaſs of Engliſh literature."

He was afterwards (about 1725) made Secretary to the Lords Juſtices of Ireland, in which he continued till 1740, when he died on the 23d of April at Bath.

"Of the poems yet unmentioned, the longeſt is "Kenſington Gardens," of which the verſification is ſmooth and elegant, but the fiction unſkilfully compounded of Grecian Deities and Gothick Fairies. Neither ſpecies of thoſe exploded beings could have done much; and when they are brought together, they only make each other contemptible. To Tickell, however, cannot be refuſed a high place among the Minor Poets; nor ſhould it be forgotten that he was one of the contributors to the "Spectator." With reſpect to his perſonal character, he is ſaid to have been a man of gay converſation, at leaſt a temperate lover of wine and company, and in his domeſtick relations without cenſure."

CONGREVE.

CONGREVE.

WILLIAM CONGREVE, deſcended from a family in Staffordſhire, of ſo great antiquity that it claims a place among the few that extend their line beyond the Norman Conqueſt, was the ſon of William Congreve, ſecond ſon of Richard Congreve, of Congreve and Stratton. If the inſcription upon his Monument be true, he was born in 1672—The biographers aſſign his nativity to Berdſa near Leeds in Yorkſhire, from the accounts given by himſelf. He is generally ſuppoſed to have been born in Ireland.

Wherever he was born, he was educated firſt at Kilkenny, and afterwards at Dublin, his father having ſome military employment that ſtationed him in Ireland; but after having paſſed through the uſual preparatory ſtudies, his father thought it proper to aſſign him a profeſſion; and about the time of the Revolution ſent him, at the age of fifteen, to ſtudy law in the Middle Temple, where he lived for ſeveral years, but with very little attention to Statutes or Reports.

His diſpoſition to become an Author appeared very early. His firſt performance was a Novel, called "Incognita; or, Love and Duty reconciled" which is much praiſed by the biographers. His firſt Dramatick labour was the "Old Bachelor," which, whenever written, was acted (1693) when he was not more than twenty-one years old. Dryden ſaid that he never had ſeen ſuch a firſt play. Few theatrical pieces have ever been ſo beneficial to the writer; for it procured him the patronage of Halifax, who immediately made him one of the Commiſſioners for licenſing Coaches,

and

and ſoon after gave him a place in the Pipe Office, and another in the Cuſtoms of 600l. per annum.

Next year he gave another ſpecimen of his abilities in "The Double Dealer," which was not received ſo well as the other. Queen Mary conferred upon both theſe plays the honour of her preſence; and when ſhe died, ſoon after, Congreve teſtified his gratitude (as Johnſon ſays) "by a deſpicable effuſion of elegiac paſtoral; a compoſition in which all is unnatural, and yet nothing is new."

In another year (1695) his prolifick pen produced "Love for Love," a Comedy of nearer alliance to life, and exhibiting more real manners, than either of the former. With this play was opened the New Theatre, under the direction of Betterton the tragedian, where he exhibited two years afterwards (1697) "The Mourning Bride," a tragedy, ſo written as to ſhew him ſufficiently qualified for either kind of Dramatick poetry. He produced theſe four plays before he had paſſed his twenty-fifth year. Upon this, Johnſon declares, that "among all the efforts of early genius which literary hiſtory records, I doubt whether any one can be produced that more ſurpaſſes the common limits of nature than the plays of Congreve."

About this time Collier made a powerful attack upon the Stage and Dramatick Writers—Congreve and Vanbrugh preſented themſelves among others as Champions on the ſide of their brother poets—The oppoſition was fierce, and continued for a long time, until at laſt Comedy grew more modeſt, and Collier lived to ſee the reward of his labour in the reformation of the Theatre.

Congreve's laſt play was "The Way of the World," which, although written with great labour and much thought, was received with ſo little favour, that he reſolved to commit his quiet and his fame no more to the caprices of an audience. From this time his life ceaſed

ceaſed to be publick: he, lived for himſelf and his friends, who eagerly ſought his company, as his manners were polite, and his converſation pleaſing. It was thought that he would have been diſplaced on the extruſion of his friends the Whigs, but the Earl of Oxford kept him in: and on their return to power, he was made Secretary for the Iſland of Jamaica, which, with his poſt in the Cuſtoms, is ſaid to have afforded him twelve hundred pounds a year.

Having long converſed familiarly with the great, he wiſhed to be conſidered rather as a man of faſhion than of wit; and when he received a viſit from Voltaire, he diſguſted him by the deſpicable foppery of deſiring to be conſidered not as an Author but a Gentleman; to which the Frenchman replied, "that if he had been only a Gentleman, he ſhould not have come to viſit him."

In his latter days he was troubled with cataracts in his eyes, which at laſt terminated in blindneſs. This melancholy ſtate was aggravated by the gout, for which he ſought relief by a journey to Bath; but being overturned in his chariot, he complained from that time of a pain in his ſide, and died at his houſe in Surrey-Street in the Strand, January 29, 1728-9. He was buried in Weſtminſter Abbey, where a Monument is erected to his memory by Henrietta Ducheſs of Marlborough, to whom, for reaſons either not known or not mentioned, he bequeathed a legacy of about 10,000l.; at the time when the ancient family from which he deſcended was, by the imprudence of his relation, reduced to difficulties and diſtreſs.

"Congreve has merit of the higheſt kind; he is an original Writer, who borrowed neither the models of his plot, nor the manner of his dialogue. Of his plays I cannot ſpeak diſtinctly; for ſince I inſpected them many years have paſſed; but what remains upon my memory is, that his characters are commonly fictitious

titious and artificial, with very little of nature, and not much of life*. He formed a peculiar idea of comick excellence, which he ſuppoſed to conſiſt in gay remarks and unexpected anſwers; but that which he endeavoured, he ſeldom failed of performing. His ſcenes exhibit not much of humour, imagery, or paſſion: his perſonages are a kind of intellectual gladiators; every ſentence is to ward or ſtrike; the conteſt of ſmartneſs is never intermitted; his wit is a meteor playing to and fro with alternate corruſcations. His comedies have therefore, in ſome degree, the operation of tragedies; they ſurpriſe rather than divert, and raiſe admiration oftener than merriment. But they are the works of a mind replete with images, and quick in combination.

"Of his miſcellaneous poetry, I cannot ſay any thing very favourable. The powers of Congreve ſeem to deſert him when he leaves the Stage, as Anteus was no longer ſtrong than he could touch the ground. It cannot be obſerved without wonder, that a mind ſo vigorous and fertile in dramatick compoſitions ſhould on any other occaſion diſcover nothing but impotence and poverty. He has in theſe little pieces neither elevation of fancy, ſelection of language, nor ſkill in verſification: yet if I were required to ſelect from the whole maſs of Engliſh poetry the moſt poetical paragraph, I know not what I could prefer to an exclamation in "The Mourning Bride:"

ALMERIA.

It was a fancy'd noiſe; for all is huſh'd.

LEONORA.

It bore the accent of a human voice.

* See a very different opinion by Dryden in a Letter to Walſh, never printed, but quoted by Mr. Seward, ANECDOTES, vol. ii. p. 102.

ALMERIA.

It was thy fear, or elſe ſome tranſient wind
Whiſtling thro' hollows of this vaulted iſle;
We'll liſten.—

LEONORA.

Hark!

ALMERIA.

No, all is huſh'd, and ſtill as death——'Tis dreadful!
How reverend is the face of this tall pile;
Whoſe ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
To bear aloft its arch'd and pond'rous roof,
By its own weight made ſtedfaſt and immoveable,
Looking tranquillity! It ſtrikes an awe
And terror on my aching ſight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And ſhoot a chilneſs to my trembling heart.
Give me thy hand, and let me hear thy voice;
Nay, quickly ſpeak to me, and let me hear
Thy voice——my own affrights me with its echoes.

"He who reads theſe lines enjoys for a moment the powers of a poet; he feels what he remembers to have felt before, but he feels it with great increaſe of ſenſibility; he recognizes a familiar image, but meets it again amplified and expanded, embelliſhed with beauty, and enlarged with majeſty."

Speaking of the other pieces by Congreve, Johnſon ſays, that the "Birth of the Muſe" is a miſerable fiction; that of his irregular poems, "that to Mrs. Arabella Hunt ſeems to be the beſt;" that his imitations of Horace "are feebly paraphraſtical," his tranſlations "weakened with expletives, and his rhymes frequently imperfect."

"While Comedy or while Tragedy is regarded, his plays are likely to be read; but except what relates to the ſtage, I know not that he has ever written a ſtanza that is ſung, or a couplet that is quoted. The general character of his Miſcellanies is, that they ſhew little wit, and little virtue.

"Yet to him it muſt be confeſſed that we are indebted for the correction of a national error, and the cure

cure of our Pindarick madneſs. He firſt taught the Engliſh Writers that "Pindar's Odes" were regular; and, though certainly he had not the fire requiſite for the higher ſpecies of Lyrick poetry, he has ſhewn us that enthuſiaſm has its rules, and that in mere confuſion there is neither grace nor greatneſs."

FENTON.

ELISHA FENTON was born near Newcaſtle in Staffordſhire, of an ancient family, whoſe eſtate was very conſiderable; but he was the younger of twelve children, and, being therefore neceſſarily deſtined to ſome lucrative employment, was ſent firſt to ſchool, and afterwards to Cambridge; but doubting the legality of the government, and refuſing to qualify himſelf for publick employment by the oaths required, he left the Univerſity without a degree. By this perverſeneſs of integrity he was driven out a commoner of nature, and reduced to pick up a livelihood uncertain and fortuitous; but it muſt be remembered, that he kept his name unſullied, and that whoever mentioned Fenton mentioned him with honour.

From the imperfect account left of this writer, it is impoſſible to trace him from year to year. He was a while Secretary to Charles Earl of Orrery in Flanders, and tutor to his young ſon. He was at one time aſſiſtant in the ſchool of Mr. Bonwicke in Surrey; and at another kept a ſchool for himſelf at Seven Oaks in Kent; but was perſuaded to leave it (1710) by Mr. St. John, with promiſes of a more honourable employment. Before this, he had extolled the Duke of Marlborough and his family in an "Elegiac Paſtoral," and in 1707 publiſhed a collection of poems.

When Pope, after the great ſucceſs of his "Iliad," undertook the "Odyſſey," he determined to engage auxiliaries. Broome and Fenton had twelve books diſtributed between them. Fenton tranſlated the firſt, the fourth, the nineteenth, and the twentieth, and with ſo much ſucceſs, together with his aſſociate, that their books cannot be diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of Pope.

In 1723 was performed his tragedy of "Mariamne." Gibber rejected it, but it was afterwards played at the other theatre and received with general applauſe. The author's profits are ſaid to have amounted to near 1000 l.

It was perhaps after this play that he undertook to reviſe the punctuation of Milton's poems. To this edition he prefixed a ſhort and elegant account of Milton's life, written at once with tenderneſs and integrity. He likewiſe publiſhed (1729) a very ſplendid edition of Waller with notes.

The latter part of his life was calm and pleaſant. The relict of Sir William Trumbal invited him, by Pope's recommendation, to educate her ſon. She afterwards detained him with her as the auditor of her accounts. He died in 1730, at Eaſthampſtead in Berkſhire, the ſeat of the Lady Trumbal, and Pope, who had been always his friend, honoured him with an epitaph.

"In his perſon, Fenton was tall and bulky, inclined to corpulence, which he did not leſſen by much exerciſe; for he was very ſluggiſh and ſedentary, roſe late, and when he had riſen ſat down to his book or papers. A woman, that had once waited on him in a lodging, told him, as ſhe ſaid, that he would *lie a bed, and be fed with a ſpoon.* This, however, was not the worſt that might have been prognoſticated; for Pope ſays, in his letter, that *he died of indolence*; but his immediate diſtemper was the gout.

"Of

" Of his morals and his converſation the account is uniform: he was never named but with praiſe and fondneſs, as a man in the higheſt degree amiable and excellent. Such was the character given him by the Earl of Orrery, his pupil; ſuch is the teſtimony of Pope, and ſuch were the ſuffrages of all who could boaſt of his acquaintance."

" His collection of poems is now to be conſidered. The " Ode to the Sun," is written upon a common plan, without uncommon ſentiments; but its greateſt fault is its length. No poem ſhould be long, of which the purpoſe is only to ſtrike the fancy, without enlightening the underſtanding by precept, ratiocination, or narrative. A blaze firſt pleaſes, and then tires the ſight."

" To examine his performances one by one would be tedious. His " Tranſlation from Homer," into blank verſe will find few readers, while another can be had in rhyme. The piece addreſſed to Lambarde is no diſagreeable ſpecimen of epiſtolary poetry; and his " Ode to the Lord Gower" was pronounced by Pope the next ode in the Engliſh language to Dryden's Cecilia. Fenton may be juſtly eſteemed an excellent verſifyer, and a good poet."

PRIOR.

MATTHEW PRIOR was born July 21, 1664, according to ſome at Winbourne in Dorſetſhire, of what parents is not exactly known; others ſay that he was the ſon of a joiner of London*.

* *When he ſtood candidate for his fellowſhip at Cambridge he was regiſtered by himſelf as of Middleſex.* This record, being on oath, ought to be preferred.

He is ſuppoſed to have fallen by his father's death into the hands of his uncle, a vintner near Charing-Croſs, who ſent him for ſome time to Dr. Buſby at Weſtminſter; but, when he was advanced in literature, took him to his own houſe; where the Earl of Dorſet, celebrated for patronage of genius, found him by chance, as Burnet relates, reading Horace, and was ſo well pleaſed with his proficiency, that he undertook the care and coſt of his academical education.

He entered his name in St. John's College at Cambridge in 1682, in his eighteenth year. He became a bachelor, as is uſual, in four years, and two years afterwards wrote the poem on the "Deity," which ſtands firſt in his volume. The ſame year he publiſhed "The City Mouſe and Country Mouſe," to ridicule Dryden's "Hind and Panther," in conjunction with Mr. Montague.

The "City Mouſe and Country Mouſe" cauſed its authors to be ſpeedily preferred. Montague indeed obtained the firſt notice, but Prior had not afterwards much reaſon to complain; for in 1691 he was ſent to the Congreſs at the Hague as Secretary to the Embaſſy, in which aſſembly was formed the grand alliance againſt Lewis. The conduct of Prior was ſo pleaſing to King William, that he made him one of the Gentlemen of his bedchamber; and he is ſuppoſed to have paſſed ſome of the next years in the cultivation of literature and poetry.

Prior, who was both a poet and a courtier, was not likely to miſs the opportunity of paying reſpect to William on the death of Queen Mary (in 1695). He wrote a long ode on the occaſion, which was preſented to the king. In two years after he was Secretary to another embaſſy at the treaty of Ryſwick, in 1697; and next year had the ſame office at the court of France, where he is ſaid to have been conſidered with great diſtinction.

He

He was in the following year at Loo with the King; from whom, after a long audience, he carried orders to England, and upon his arrival became under ſecretary of ſtate in the Earl of Jerſey's office; a poſt which he did not retain long, becauſe Jerſey was removed; but he was ſoon made Commiſſioner of Trade.

This year (1700) produced one of his longeſt and moſt ſplendid compoſitions, the "Carmen Seculare." In the Parliament that met in 1701, he was choſen repreſentative of Eaſt Grinſtead. Perhaps it was about this time that he changed his party; for he voted for the impeachment of thoſe lords who had perſuaded the king to the *Partition-treaty*, a treaty in which he had himſelf been miniſterially employed.

A great part of Queen Anne's reign was a time of war, in which there was little employment for negociators, and Prior had therefore leiſure to make or to publiſh verſes. When the battle of Blenheim called forth all the verſemen, Prior, among the reſt, took care to ſhew his delight in the increaſing honour of his country, by an "Epiſtle to Boileau." He publiſhed ſoon after a volume of poems.

The battle of Ramilies (in 1706) excited him to another effort of poetry, and in the paper of the "Examiner" then publiſhed, he wrote an eſſay in ridicule of "Garth's verſes to Godolphin, upon the loſs of his place."

The Tories, who were now in power, were in haſte to end the war; and Prior was ſent (July 1711) privately to Paris with propoſitions of peace. He returned in about a month, and brought with him M. Meſnager, a miniſter from France, inveſted with full powers, and the Abbé Gaultier.

The negotiation was begun at Prior's houſe, where the Queen's miniſters met Meſnager (September 20, 1711), and entered privately upon the great buſineſs, the deſign of treating not being yet openly declared.

This clandeſtine meeting was aggravated, when the Whigs returned to power, to a charge of high treaſon.

The peace advancing ſlowly, Bolingbroke was ſent to Paris to adjuſt differences with leſs formality. Prior was alſo ſent, who, after continuing to act without a title for ſome time, aſſumed by authority the ſtile and dignity of Embaſſador. Prior's publick ſplendour commenced in Auguſt 1713, and continued till the Auguſt following.

On the firſt of Auguſt 1714 enſued the downfal of the Tories and the degradation of Prior. He was recalled; but was not able to return, being detained by the debts which he had found it neceſſary to contract, and which were not diſcharged before March. He returned then as ſoon as he could, and was welcomed on the 25th of March by a warrant, and, after an examination before a committee of the Privy Council, was put into ſtricter confinement than to his own houſe, in which he had been ſuffered to live under the cuſtody of the meſſenger. On the tenth of June 1715, Mr. Walpole moved for an impeachment againſt him, and Prior was, a week after, committed to cloſe cuſtody, with orders that *no perſon ſhould be admitted to ſee him without leave from the Speaker.*

When, two years after, an Act of Grace was paſſed, he was excepted, and continued ſtill in cuſtody, which he had made leſs tedious by writing "Alma." He was, however, ſoon after diſcharged.

He had now his liberty; but, whatever the profits of his employments might have been, he had always ſpent it; and at the age of fifty-three was, with all his abilities, in danger of penury, having no ſolid revenue but from the fellowſhip of his college*. Being how-

* Mr. Seward ſays, "Prior kept his fellowſhip of St. John's college, Cambridge, to the laſt." "The ſalary," ſaid he, "will always enſure me a bit of mutton and a clean ſhirt." ANECDOTES, vol. ii. 306.

ever

ever generally known and eſteemed, he was encouraged to add other poems to thoſe which he had printed, and publiſh them by ſubſcription. The price of the volume was two guineas, and the whole collection was four thouſand; to which Lord Harley, the ſon of the Earl of Oxford, to whom he had invariably adhered, added an equal ſum for the purchaſe of Down-hall, which Prior was to enjoy during life, and Harley after his deceaſe.

There is no account of any occurrences in his remaining life *. He died at *Wimple*, a ſeat of the Earl of Oxford, the 18th of September 1721, and was buried in Weſtminſter Abbey.

Johnſon ſays, that eminent as Prior was, both by his abilities and ſtation, very few memorials have been left by his cotemporaries reſpecting his private cha-

* Prior, as Mr. Seward tells us, in the latter part of his life reſided at Down Hall, Eſſex, and amuſed himſelf with a ſelect party of friends at any kind of nonſenſe that occurred. Sir James Thornhill was often of the party, and in the evening, between dinner and ſupper, uſed to make drawings of ſome of Mr. Prior's gueſts. Prior uſed to write verſes under them. Under the head of Mr. Timothy Thomas, Chaplain to Lord Oxford, Prior wrote—

This phiz, ſo well drawn, you may eaſily know,
It was done by a Knight for one Tom with an O.

Under Chriſtian the Seal Engraver's head Prior wrote—

This, done by candle light and hazard,
Is meant to ſhew Kit Chriſtian's mazzard.

An ingenious and elegant collector has many of theſe portraits, with the verſes under them in Prior's hand-writing.

At Lord Oxford's ſeat at Wimple (now Lord Hardwicke's) there hung a fine picture of Harley in his Speaker's robes, with the roll of the bill in his hand for bringing in the preſent family; which, if I miſtake not, was done by his caſting vote. In alluſion to Harley's being afterwards ſent to the Tower, Prior wrote with a pencil on the white ſcroll, "Bill paid ſuch a day."

He, like many an ex-miniſter, became hypochondriacal in the latter part of his life; his active mind, not having any pabulum to feed it, began to prey upon itſelf. He became deaf, or at leaſt thought himſelf ſo. When ſome one aſked him, whether he had ever obſerved himſelf deaf when he was in office, "Faith," replied he, "I was then ſo afraid of my head, that I did not attend very much to my ears." ANECDOTES, vol. ii. 305.

racter. After making ſome obſervations on his public conduct, he relates the following pleaſant ſtories of him:

"During his embaſſy, he ſat at the opera by a man, who, in his rapture, accompanied with his own voice the principal ſinger. Prior fell to railing at the performer with all the terms of reproach that he could collect, till the Frenchman, ceaſing from his ſong, began to expoſtulate with him for his harſh cenſure of a man who was confeſſedly the ornament of the ſtage. "I know all that," ſays the embaſſador, "*mais il chante ſi haut, que je ne ſçaurois vous entendre* *."

"In a gay French company, where every one ſung a little ſong or ſtanza, of which the burden was, *Banniſſons la Melancholie*, when it came to his turn to ſing, after the performance of a young lady that ſat next him, he produced theſe extemporary lines:

Mais celle voix, et ces beaux yeux,
Font cupidon trop dangereux,
Et je ſuis triſte quand je crie
Banniſſons la melancholie.

Tradition repreſents him as willing to deſcend from the dignity of the poet and the ſtateſman to the low delights of mean company. His Chloe probably was ſometimes ideal; but the woman with whom he cohabited was a deſpicable drab of the loweſt ſpecies. One of his wenches, perhaps Chloe, while he was abſent from his houſe, ſtole his plate, and ran away; as was related by a woman who had been his ſervant. Of this propenſity to ſordid converſe, I have ſeen an account ſo ſeriouſly ridiculous, that it ſeems to deſerve inſertion.

"*I have been aſſured that Prior, after having ſpent the evening with Oxford, Bolingbroke, Pope, and Swift,*

* But he ſings ſo loud, that I cannot hear you.

would

would go and ſmoke a pipe, and drink a bottle of ale, with a common ſoldier and his wife, in Long-Acre, before he went to bed."

Johnſon divides his works into tales, love-verſes, occaſional poems, " Alma" and " Solomon." After deſcanting on the firſt, he comes to the love-verſes, among which he thus characteriſes one of the moſt celebrated :

" The greateſt of all his amorous eſſays is " Henry and Emma," a dull and tedious dialogue, which excites neither eſteem for the man nor tenderneſs for the woman. The example of Emma, who reſolves to follow an outlawed murderer wherever fear and guilt ſhall drive him, deſerves no imitation; and the experiment by which Henry tries the lady's conſtancy, is ſuch as muſt end either in infamy to her, or in diſappointment to himſelf."

" Alma" is written in profeſſed imitation of Hudibras, and has at leaſt one accidental reſemblance. Hudibras wants a plan, becauſe it is left imperfect; " Alma" is imperfect, becauſe it ſeems never to have had a plan. Prior appears not to have propoſed to himſelf any drift or deſign, but to have written the caſual dictates of the preſent moment.

" What Horace ſaid when he imitated Lucilius, might be ſaid of Butler by Prior, his numbers were not ſmooth or neat: Prior excelled him in verſification, but he was like Horace, *inventore minor*; he had not Butler's exuberance of matter and variety of illuſtration. The ſparkle of wit which he could afford, he knew how to poliſh; but he wanted the bullion of his maſter. Butler pours out a negligent profuſion, certain of the weight, but careleſs of the ſtamp. Prior has comparatively little, but with that little he makes a fine ſhew. " Alma" has many admirers, and was the only piece among Prior's works of which Pope ſaid that he ſhould wiſh to be the author."

"His "Solomon" was undoubtedly written with great labour; and who is willing to think that he has been labouring in vain. He had infused into it much knowledge and much thought; had often polished it to elegance, often dignified it with splendour, and sometimes heightened it to sublimity; he perceived in it many excellencies, and did not discover that it wanted that without which all others are of small avail, the power of engaging attention and alluring curiosity.

"The tediousness of this poem proceeds not from the uniformity of the subject, for it is sufficiently diversified, but from the continued tenor of the narration; in which Solomon relates the successive vicissitudes of his own mind, without the intervention of any other speaker, or the mention of any other agent, unless it be Abra; and the reader is only to learn what he thought, and to be told that he thought wrong. The event of every experiment is foreseen, and therefore the process is not much regarded.

"Yet the work is far from deserving to be neglected. He that shall peruse it will be able to mark many passages, to which he may recur for instruction or delight; many from which the poet may learn to write, and the philosopher to reason."

"If Prior's poetry be generally considered, his praise will be that of correctness and industry, rather than of compass of comprehension, or activity of fancy. He never made any effort of invention: his greater pieces were all tissues of sentiments, and his smaller, which consist of light images or single conceits, were not always his own. I have traced him among the French epigrammatists, and have been informed that he poached for prey among obscure authors."

Speaking of his diligence and his judgment, Johnson says, "If this part of his character suffers any abatement, it must be from the disproportion of his rhymes, which

which have not always ſufficient conſonance, and from the admiſſion of broken lines into his "Solomon;" but perhaps he thought like Cowley, that hemiſticks ought to be admitted into heroick poetry."

"Prior is never low, nor very often ſublime. It is ſaid by Longinus of Euripides, that he forces himſelf ſometimes into grandeur by violence of effort, as the lion kindles his fury by the laſhes of his own tail. Whatever Prior obtains above mediocrity ſeems the effort of ſtruggle and of pain. He has many vigorous, but few happy lines; he has every thing by purchaſe, and nothing by gift; he had no *nightly viſitations* of the muſe, no infuſions of ſentiment or felicities of fancy."

"Some of his poems are written without regularity of meaſures; for, when he commenced poet, we had not recovered from our Pindarick infatuation; but he probably lived to be convinced that the eſſence of verſe is order and conſonance.

"His numbers are ſuch as mere diligence may attain; they ſeldom offend the ear, and ſeldom ſooth it; they commonly want airineſs, lightneſs, and facility; what is ſmooth is not ſoft. His verſes always roll, but they ſeldom flow *."

POPE.

* The late excellent Ducheſs of Portland had five Dialogues of the Dead in MS. written by this celebrated Poet †.

† Prior's Dialogues in the Ducheſs of Portland's poſſeſſion are thus deſcribed in the Preface to Nichols's "Collection of Poems:"

"The late Recorder of Cambridge [Pont] had ſeen ſome MS. Dialogues of the Dead of Prior's; they were proſe, but had verſe intermixed freely; and the ſpecimen, I heard, proved it. The Dialogue was between Sir Thomas More and the Vicar of Bray. You muſt allow that the characters are well choſen; and the ſpeakers maintain their reſpective opinions ſmartly; at laſt the Knight ſeems to come over to his adverſary, at leaſt ſo far as to allow that the doctrine was convenient, if not honourable; but that he did not ſee how any man could allow himſelf to act thus: when the Vicar concludes; Nothing eaſier, with proper management; &c. You muſt go the right way to work—

For

POPE.

ALEXANDER POPE was born in London, May 22, 1688, of parents whoſe rank or ſtation was never aſcertained; we are informed, that his father was of a family of which the Earl of Downe was the head, and that his mother was the daughter of William Turner, Eſq. of York.

This is told by Pope. It is allowed that his father grew rich by trade, but whether in a ſhop or on the exchange has never been diſcovered. Both parents were Papiſts.

Pope was from his birth of a conſtitution tender and delicate; his voice, when he was young, was ſo pleaſing that he was called in fondneſs the *Little Nightingale*.

Not being ſent early to ſchool he was taught to read by an aunt; and when he was ſeven or eight years old became a lover of books.

When he was about eight, he was placed in Hampſhire under a Romiſh prieſt, who taught him the Greek and Latin. He was firſt regularly initiated in poetry by the peruſal of Ogilby's "Homer" and Sandys's "Ovid." He was now removed to a ſchool at Twyford near Wincheſter, and again to another ſchool

For Conſcience, like a fiery horſe,
Will ſtumble, if you check his courſe;
But ride him with an eaſy rein,
And rub him down with worldly gain,
He'll carry you through thick and thin,
Safe, although dirty, to your inn."

This certainly is ſterling ſenſe.

about

about Hyde Park Corner; from which he uſed ſometimes to ſtroll to the play-houſe, and was ſo delighted with theatrical exhibitions, that he formed a kind of play from Ogilby's "Iliad," which he perſuaded his ſchool-fellows to act, with the addition of his maſter's gardener, who perſonated *Ajax*. It was under the two laſt maſters he tranſlated more than a fourth part of the "Metamorphoſes." He uſed to ſay, that he could not remember the time when he began to make verſes.

About the period of the Revolution his father quitted his trade, whatever it was, and retired to Binfield in Windſor foreſt, with about twenty thouſand pounds, which he locked up in a cheſt, and took from it what his expences required. To this place Pope was called by his father when he was about twelve years old, and then had for a few months the aſſiſtance of another prieſt.

Pope, finding little advantage from external help, reſolved thenceforward to direct himſelf, and at twelve formed a plan of ſtudy which he completed with little other incitement than the deſire of excellence, and his primary and principal purpoſe was to be a poet.

In his peruſal of the Engliſh poets he ſoon diſtinguiſhed the verſification of Dryden, and was impreſſed with ſuch veneration for his character, that he perſuaded ſome friend to take him to the Coffee Houſe which Dryden frequented, and pleaſed himſelf with having ſeen him. Dryden died May 1, 1701, ſome days before Pope was twelve.

The earlieſt of Pope's productions is his "Ode on Solitude," written about the above age; and as he read the Claſſicks he amuſed himſelf with tranſlating them. At fourteen he made a verſion of the firſt book of the "Thebais." He gave "Chaucer" a more faſhionable appearance, and put "January and May," and the "Prologue of the Wife of Bath" into modern Engliſh. He tranſlated likewiſe the Epiſtle of "Sappho to Phaon"

Phaon" from Ovid, to complete the verſion which was before imperfect; and wrote ſome other ſmall pieces, which he afterwards printed. At fourteen he wrote his poem of "Silence" after the manner of Rocheſter's "Nothing," and alſo his "Windſor Foreſt." Next year he removed for a time to London, that he might ſtudy French and Italian. He then returned to Binfield, and delighted himſelf with his own poetry. He wrote a Comedy, a Tragedy, an Epick poem, with panegyricks on all the Princes of Europe. Moſt of his puerile productions were, by his maturer judgment, afterwards deſtroyed. "Alcander," the Epick Poem, was burnt by the perſuaſion of Atterbury. The Tragedy was founded on the legend of "St. Genevieve." Of the Comedy there is no account.

He next tranſlated Tully "on Old Age," Sir Wm. Trumbul, who had been Secretary of State, when he retired from buſineſs, fixed his reſidence in the neighbourhood of Binfield. Pope, not yet ſixteen, was introduced to the Stateſman of ſixty, and ſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf that their interviews ended in friendſhip and correſpondence.

He now wrote his "Paſtorals," although they were not publiſhed till five years afterwards. At this time began his acquaintance with Wicherley and Mr. Cromwel.

Walſh the Critic was one of his firſt encouragers. His regard was gained by the "Paſtorals." Walſh adviſed him to correctneſs, and, being delighted with rural poems, recommended to him to write a paſtoral Comedy, a deſign which Pope did not follow.

He began at ſeventeen to frequent Wills's, a Coffee Houſe on the North ſide of Ruſſel Street in Covent Garden, where the Wits at that time uſed to aſſemble. During this part of his life he was indefatigably diligent. The account given by himſelf of his ſtudies was, that from fourteen to twenty he read only for amuſement,

amuſement, from twenty to twenty-ſeven for improvement and inſtruction.

The paſtorals, which had been for ſome time handed about among Poets and Critics, were at laſt printed (1709) in Tonſon's Miſcellany, in a volume which began with the "Paſtorals of Philips," and ended with thoſe of Pope. The ſame year was written the "Eſſay on Criticiſm," and publiſhed about two years afterwards. It was much and deſervedly praiſed by Addiſon in the "Spectator," but was pretty ſeverely attacked by Dennis.

Of this Eſſay Pope declared that he did not expect the ſale to be quick, becauſe *not one gentleman in ſixty, even of liberal education, could underſtand it.* He mentions a thouſand copies as a numerous impreſſion. It has been tranſlated into French by *Hamilton*, and commented by Dr. Warburton.

In the "Spectator" was publiſhed the "Meſſiah," which he firſt ſubmitted to the peruſal of Steele, and corrected in compliance with his criticiſms. The verſes on the "Unfortunate Lady," it is ſuppoſed, were written about the time when his "Eſſay" was publiſhed. Not long after he wrote the "Rape of the Lock," the moſt airy, the moſt ingenious, and the moſt delightful of all his compoſitions, occaſioned by Lord Petre cutting off a lock of Mrs. Arabella Fermor's hair. It was written, as is ſaid, in a fortnight (1711), and at its firſt appearance it was termed by Addiſon *merum ſal.* Pope always conſidered the intertexture of the machinery with the action as his moſt ſucceſsful exertion of poetical art. He indeed could never afterwards produce any thing of ſuch unexampled excellence.

About this time he publiſhed "The Temple of Fame," which, as he tells Steele in their correſpondence, he had written two years before.

Of

Of the Epiſtle from "Eloiſa to Abelard" the date is not known. His firſt inclination to attempt a compoſition of that tender kind aroſe, according to Savage, from his peruſal of Prior's "Nut Brown Maid." It may be ſaid with juſtice, that he has excelled every compoſition of the ſame kind. This piece was, however, not much his favourite in his latter years, though upon what principle he ſlighted it is not known.

In the next year (1713) he publiſhed "Windſor Foreſt;" of which part was, as he relates, written at ſixteen, about the ſame time as his "Paſtorals," and the latter part was added afterwards. "Cato" being now revived, Pope introduced it by a Prologue.

It appears, that about this time he had a ſtrong inclination to unite the art of painting with that of poetry, and put himſelf under the tuition of Jervas. A picture of Betterton, ſuppoſed to be drawn by him, was in the poſſeſſion of Lord Mansfield: if this was taken from life, he muſt have begun to paint early, for Betterton was now dead. It is ſaid that he made no great proficiency in the art.

The next year (1713) produced an attempt by which profit was ſought as well as praiſe. He reſolved to try how far the favour of the publick extended, by ſoliciting a ſubſcription to a Verſion of the "Iliad."

There was reaſon to believe that his attempt would be ſucceſsful, for he was in the full bloom of reputation. He therefore offered an Engliſh "Iliad" to ſubſcribers in ſix volumes in quarto, for ſix guineas. His propoſal was ſo very favourably received, that the bookſellers made their offers with great eagerneſs: but the higheſt bidder was *Bernard Lintot*; who, notwithſtanding all his hopes and his liberality, was, by a very unjuſt and illegal action, defrauded of his profit. An edition of the Engliſh "Iliad" was printed in Holland in duodecimo, and imported clandeſtinely for

for thoſe who were impatient to read what they could not yet afford to buy. Of this edition the ſale was doubtleſs very numerous.

Pope having now emitted his propoſals, and fully engaged his reputation in the undertaking, began to be frighted with the importance of the attempt—He had his nights diſturbed by dreams of long journies through unknown ways, and wiſhed, as he ſaid, *that ſomebody would hang him.*

This miſery, however, was not of long continuance; he grew by degrees more acquainted with Homer's images and expreſſions, and practice encreaſed his felicity of verſification. In a ſhort time he repreſents himſelf as diſpatching regularly fifty verſes a day. Thus by his own diligence, and with ſuch help as kindneſs or money could procure him, in ſomewhat more than five years he completed his verſion of the "Iliad," with the Notes. He began it in 1712, his twenty-fifth year, and concluded it in 1718, his thirtieth year.

The encouragement given to this tranſlation, though report ſeems to have over-rated it, was ſuch as the world has not often ſeen. The ſubſcribers were five hundred and fifty-four. For thoſe copies Pope had nothing to pay; he therefore received, including two hundred pounds a volume allowed him by the bookſeller, 5300l. 4s. without deduction, as the books were ſupplied by Lintot.

By the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription Pope was not only relieved from thoſe pecuniary diſtreſſes with which, notwithſtanding his popularity, he had hitherto ſtruggled, but his future life was ſecured from want by conſiderable annuities. Johnſon ſays, that the Engliſh "Iliad" is certainly "the nobleſt verſion of poetry which the world has ever ſeen."

It was publiſhed volume by volume, as the tranſlation proceeded; the firſt four books appeared in 1715.

The

The reputation of this great work ſerved to deprive him of a friend. Addiſon and he were now at the head of poetry and criticiſm; and both in ſuch a ſtate of elevation, that, like the two rivals in the Roman ſtate, one could no longer bear an equal, nor the other a ſuperior. From the emiſſion and reception of the propoſals of the "Iliad," the kindneſs of Addiſon ſeems to have abated. Steele, with the beſt intentions, procured at laſt an interview between them. On this occaſion, it is ſaid, many invectives were made uſe of on both ſides, till the conteſt at length roſe ſo high, that they parted without any interchange of civility.

When the firſt volume was publiſhed, a rival verſion of the firſt "Iliad" was immediately printed with the name of Tickell. Addiſon gave it the preference, but the public voice was not long ſuſpended, and Pope's performance was univerſally conſidered the beſt.

He now wrote his ſatire on Addiſon, and he relates that Addiſon uſed him very civilly ever after.

This year (1715), having perſuaded his father to ſell their eſtate at Binfield, he purchaſed, only for his life, that houſe at Twickenham to which his reſidence afterwards procured ſo much celebration, and removed there with his father and mother.

While the volumes of his "Homer" were annually publiſhed, he collected his former works (1717) into one quarto volume. In this year his father died ſuddenly, in his 75th year.

The publication of the "Iliad" was completed in 1720. The ſplendor and ſucceſs of this work raiſed Pope many enemies, moſt of whoſe names are preſerved only in the "Dunciad."

In this diſaſtrous and infatuated year 1720, when more riches than Peru can boaſt were expected from the South Sea, Pope was ſeized with the univerſal paſſion of avarice. He ventured his money, and loſt, with thouſands, ſomething conſiderable.

Next

Next year he publiſhed ſome ſelect poems of his friend Dr. Parnel, and an edition of *Shakeſpeare*---Theobald alſo publiſhed an edition, and detected Pope's deficiencies, who ſeems never after to have reflected on his own undertaking without vexation.

Soon after the appearance of the "Iliad," reſolving not to let the general kindneſs cool, he publiſhed propoſals for a tranſlation of the "Odyſſey" in five volumes, for five guineas. He engaged the aſſiſtance of Fenton and Broome in order to eaſe him of the labour.

In 1723, while he was buſied in this new verſion, he appeared before the Lords at the memorable trial of Biſhop Atterbury, with whom he had lived in great familiarity. He was called to give an account of Atterbury's domeſtick life. Pope had but few words to utter, and in thoſe few he made ſeveral blunders.

Of the "Odyſſey" Pope tranſlated only twelve books; the reſt were the work of Broome and Fenton; the notes were written wholly by Broome, who was not over-liberally rewarded. The firſt copy of Pope's books, with thoſe of Fenton, are to be ſeen in the Muſeum. The parts of Pope are leſs interlined than the "Iliad," and the latter books of the "Iliad" leſs than the former. The books of Fenton have very few alterations by the hand of Pope. Thoſe of Broome have not been found; but Pope complained, as it is reported, that he had much trouble in correcting them.

His contract with Lintot was the ſame as for the "Iliad," except that only one hundred pounds were to be paid him for each volume. The number of ſubſcribers were 574, and of copies 819; ſo that his profit, when he had paid his aſſiſtants, was ſtill very conſiderable. The work was finiſhed in 1725, and from that time he reſolved to make no more tranſlations. The ſale did not anſwer Lintot's expectations.

"Som

Some time after, Pope loſt the uſe of two of his fingers, by their being ſeverely cut with ſome fragments of glaſs, on his being overturned in a friend's coach. Voltaire, who was then in England, ſent him a letter of conſolation, but Pope never conſidered him as a man worthy of confidence.

He ſoon afterwards (1727) joined with Swift, who was then in England, to publiſh three volumes of "Miſcellanies." In theſe was firſt publiſhed the "Art of Sinking in Poetry." In the following year (1728) the "Dunciad" made its appearance, one of his greateſt and moſt elaborate performances.

At the head of the Dunces he placed poor Theobald, whom he accuſed of ingratitude, but whoſe real crime was ſuppoſed to be that of having reviſed Shakeſpeare more happily than himſelf. This ſatire had the effect which he intended, by blaſting the characters which it touched.

After this general war upon dullneſs, he ſeems to have indulged himſelf awhile in tranquillity; but his ſubſequent productions prove that he was not idle. He publiſhed (1731) a poem on "Taſte."

The following year deprived him of Gay, a man whom he had known early, and whom he ſeemed to love with more tenderneſs than any other of his literary friends. Pope was now forty-four years old. In the next year he loſt his mother, not by an unexpected death, for ſhe had laſted to the age of 93.

Pope's letters being ſurreptitiouſly publiſhed, he was determined to vindicate his own property by a genuine edition. He therefore ſolicited a ſubſcription for a quarto volume, which appeared 1737. Before this time he publiſhed the firſt part of what he perſuaded himſelf to think a ſyſtem of ethicks, under the title of an "Eſſay on Man," which, according to a letter he wrote to Swift, had been eight years under his conſideration. In 1733 appeared the firſt part, which, together

gether with the second and third, were published without the real author's name. At last, in 1734, he avowed the fourth, and claimed the honour of a moral poet.

Its reputation soon invited a translation. It was first turned into French prose, and afterwards by Resnel into verse. His enemies spread abroad the idea, that his positions, as they terminated for the most part in natural religion, were intended to draw mankind away from revelation. His friend Warburton undertook to rescue him from the imputation of favouring fatality, and for a long time continued a vindication of the "Essay on Man" in the literary journal of that period, called the "Republick of Letters."

It was now his intention to write distinct poems upon the different duties or conditions of life; one of which is the "Epistle to Lord Bathurst (1733) on the Use of Riches." He afterwards (1734) inscribed to Lord Cobham his "Characters of Men." To this he added soon after the "Characters of Women."

From time to time (between 1730 and 1740) he published imitations of different poems of Horace, and also a revival, in smoother numbers, of "Dr. Donne's Satires." The "Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot" appeared in January 1735. In this poem Pope vindicates himself from censure, and with dignity, rather than arrogance, enforces his own claims to kindness and respect. It is in this poem that the satirical lines upon Addison are introduced.

His last satires of the general kind were two Dialogues named from the year in which they were published, "Seventeen Hundred and Thirty-eight." The "Memoirs of Scriblerus," published about this time, extend only to the first book of a work projected in concert by Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot, who used to meet in the time of Queen Anne, and denominated themselves the "Scriblerus Club." The design was never completed.

From

From the materials which he had provided, he added, at Warburton's requeſt, another book to the "Dunciad;" and ſome time after he publiſhed a new edition of it in which he degraded *Theobald* from his painful pre-eminence, and enthroned Cibber, with whom he had long been at war, in his ſtead.

Being now afflicted with an aſthma, and finding the powers of life gradually declining, he no longer ſtrained his faculties with any original compoſition, nor propoſed any other employment for his remaining life than the reviſal and correction of his former works. He laid aſide all thoughts of his epick poem.

Through the next year he perceived himſelf, as he expreſſes it, *going down the hill.* Beſides the aſthma he had other diſorders, which his phyſicians were unable to relieve.

In May 1744 his death was approaching; on the ſixth he was all day delirious, which he mentioned four days afterwards as a ſufficient humiliation of the vanity of man; he afterwards complained of ſeeing things as through a curtain and in falſe colours; and one day, in the preſence of Dodſley, aſked what arm was that came out from the wall. Bolingbroke ſometimes wept over him in this ſtate of helpleſs decay; and being told by Spence, that Pope, in the intermiſſion of his deliriouſneſs, was always ſaying ſomething kind either of his preſent or abſent friends, and that his humanity ſeemed to have ſurvived his underſtanding, anſwered, *It has ſo.* And added, *I never in my life knew a man that had ſo tender a heart for his particular friends, or more general friendſhip for mankind.* At another time he ſaid, *I have known Pope theſe thirty years, and value myſelf more in his friendſhip than*—his grief then ſuppreſſed his voice.

Pope expreſſed undoubted confidence of a future ſtate. Being aſked by his friend Mr. Hooke, a Papiſt, whether he would not die like his father and mother, and

and whether a prieſt ſhould not be called, he anſwered, *I do not think it eſſential, but it will be very right; and I thank you for putting me in mind of it.*

In the morning, after the prieſt had given him the laſt ſacrament, he ſaid, *There is nothing that is meritorious but virtue and friendſhip, and indeed friendſhip itſelf is only a part of virtue.*

He died in the evening of the 30th of May 1744, ſo placidly, that the attendants did not diſcern the exact time of his expiration. He was buried at Twickenham near his father and mother, where a monument has been erected to him by his commentator the Biſhop of Glouceſter.

Speaking of Pope's perſon and private manners, Dr. Johnſon ſays,

"He compared himſelf to a ſpider, and is deſcribed as protuberant behind and before. He is ſaid to have been beautiful in his infancy; but he was of a conſtitution originally feeble and weak; and as bodies of a tender form are eaſily diſtorted, his deformity was probably in part the effect of his application. His ſtature was ſo low, that, to bring him to a level with common tables it was neceſſary to raiſe his ſeat. But his face was not diſpleaſing, and his eyes were animated and vivid.

"By natural deformity or accidental diſtortion his vital functions were ſo much diſordered, that his life was a *long diſeaſe*. His moſt frequent aſſailant was the head-ach, which he uſed to relieve by inhaling the ſteam of coffee, which he very frequently required.

"In the middle of life he was ſo weak as to ſtand in perpetual need of female attendance, and ſo extremely ſenſible of cold, that he wore a kind of fur doublet, under a ſhirt of very coarſe warm linen with fine ſleeves. When he roſe, he was inveſted in boddice made of ſtiff canvaſs, being ſcarce able to hold himſelf erect till they were laced, and he then put on a

flannel waiſtcoat. One ſide was contracted. His legs were ſo ſlender, that he enlarged their bulk with three pairs of ſtockings, which were drawn on and off by the maid; for he was not able to dreſs or undreſs himſelf, and neither went to bed nor roſe without help. His weakneſs made it very difficult for him to be clean.

" His hair had fallen almoſt all away; and he uſed to dine ſometimes with Lord Oxford, privately, in a velvet cap. His dreſs of ceremony was black, with a tye wig, and a little ſword.

" When he wanted to ſleep he *nodded in company*; and once ſlumbered at his own table, while the Prince of Wales was talking of poetry.

" The reputation which his friendſhip gave, procured him many invitations; but he was a very troubleſome inmate. He brought no ſervant, and had ſo many wants, that a numerous attendance was ſcarcely able to ſupply them.

" His errands were ſo frequent and frivolous, that the footmen in time avoided and neglected him.

" One of his conſtant demands was of coffee in the night, and to the woman that waited on him in his chamber he was very troubleſome; but he was careful to recompenſe her want of ſleep.

" He was too indulgent to his appetite; he loved meat highly ſeaſoned and of ſtrong taſte; and at the intervals of the table amuſed himſelf with biſcuits and dry conſerves. If he ſat down to a variety of diſhes, he would oppreſs his ſtomach with repletion; and though he ſeemed angry when a dram was offered him, did not forbear to drink it*."

" In

* Mr. Seward has given us an anecdote of Pope as an epicure, which we ſhall here inſert. Pope, like many other affectedly delicate perſons, profeſſed to be fond of certain diſhes merely on account of their rarity. A nobleman, a friend of his, who wiſhed to correct this diſguſting failing in him, made his cook dreſs up a rabbit, truſſed up as a foreign bird, to which he gave ſome

" In all his intercourſe with mankind he had great delight in artifice, and endeavoured to attain all his purpoſes by indirect and unſuſpected methods. *He hardly drank tea without a ſtratagem.*

" In familiar or convivial converſation it does not appear that he excelled."

" He was fretful, and eaſily diſpleaſed, and allowed himſelf to be capriciouſly reſentful. He would ſometimes leave Lord Oxford ſilently, no one could tell why, and was to be courted back by more letters and meſſages than the footmen were willing to carry."

" He ſometimes condeſcended to be jocular with ſervants or inferiors; but by no merriment, either of others or his own, was he ever ſeen excited to laughter."

" Of his domeſtick character, frugality was a part eminently remarkable. This ſometimes appeared in petty artifices of parſimony, ſuch as the practice of writing his compoſitions on the backs of letters, as may be ſeen in the remaining copy of the " Iliad," by which perhaps in five years five ſhillings were ſaved; or in a niggardly reception of his friends, and ſcantineſs of entertainment; as, when he had two gueſts in his houſe, he would ſet at ſupper a ſingle pint of wine upon the table, and, having himſelf taken two ſmall glaſſes, would retire, and ſay, *Gentlemen, I leave you to your wine.*

" It was punctually required that his writing-box ſhould be ſet upon his bed before he roſe; and Lord Oxford's domeſtick related, that, in the dreadful winter of 1740, ſhe was called from her bed by him four times in one night to ſupply him with paper, leſt he ſhould loſe a thought."

ſome fine name, and ſeaſoned it with ſomething extremely ſavoury. The bard ate of it very heartily, and expreſſed his reliſh of the taſte of the ſuppoſed dainty; and was not a little diſpleaſed when his friend told him the trick he had put upon him.

" His fortune did not ſuffer his charity to be ſplendid and conſpicuous; but he aſſiſted Dodſley with a hundred pounds, that he might open a ſhop; and of the ſubſcription of forty pounds a year that he raiſed for Savage, twenty were paid by himſelf."

" In the duties of friendſhip he was zealous and conſtant."

" The religion in which he lived was that of the church of Rome, to which in his correſpondence with Racine he profeſſes himſelf a ſincere adherent."

" He is ſaid to have ſent nothing to the preſs till it had lain two years under his inſpection."

" The only poems which can be ſuppoſed to have been written with ſuch regard to the times as might haſten their publication, were the two ſatires of " Thirty-eight;" of which Dodſley told me, that they were brought to him by the author, that they might be fairly copied. *Every line*, ſaid he, *was then written twice over; I gave him a clean tranſcript, which he ſent ſometime afterwards to me for the preſs, with every line written twice over a ſecond time.*

" Of the paſtorals of Pope," ſays Dr. Johnſon, " the laſt, that which turns the attention upon age and death, was the author's favourite. To tell of diſappointment and miſery, to thicken the darkneſs of futurity, and perplex the labyrinth of uncertainty, has been always a delicious employment of the poets. His preference was probably juſt. I wiſh, however, that his fondneſs had not overlooked a line in which the *Zephyrs* are made *to lament in ſilence.*"

" The deſign of " Windſor Foreſt" is evidently derived from " Cooper's Hill," with ſome attention to Waller's poem on " The Park;" but Pope cannot be denied to excel his maſters in variety and elegance, and the art of interchanging deſcription, narrative, and morality.

" The

" The " Temple of Fame" has, as Steele warmly declared, *a thouſand beauties.*"

" That the " Meſſiah" excels the " Pollio" is no great praiſe, if it be conſidered from what original the improvements are derived."

" The " Verſes on the Unfortunate Lady" have drawn much attention by the illaudable ſingularity of treating ſuicide with reſpect, and they muſt be allowed to be written in ſome parts with vigorous animation, and in others with gentle tenderneſs; nor has Pope produced any poem in which the ſenſe predominates more over the diction. But the tale is not ſkilfully told."

" The " Ode for St. Cecilia's Day" was undertaken at the deſire of Steele: in this the author is generally confeſſed to have miſcarried, yet he has miſcarried only compared with Dryden; for he has far outgone other competitors."

" One of his greateſt though of his earlieſt works is the " Eſſay on Criticiſm," which, if he had written nothing elſe, would have placed him among the firſt critics, and the firſt of the poets, as it exhibits every mode of excellence that can embelliſh or dignify didactic compoſition, ſelection of matter, novelty of arrangement, juſtneſs of precept, ſplendour of illuſtration, and propriety of digreſſion."

" To the praiſes which have been accumulated on " The Rape of the Lock" by readers of every claſs, from the critick to the waiting-maid, it is difficult to make any addition."

" The Epiſtle of " Eloiſa to Abelard" is one of the moſt happy productions of human wit: the ſubject is ſo judiciouſly choſen, that it would be difficult, in turning over the annals of the world, to find another which ſo many circumſtances concur to recommend."

" The train of my diſquiſition has now conducted me to that poetical wonder, the tranſlation of the

" Iliad;" a performance which no age or nation can pretend to equal."

" He cultivated our language with so much diligence and art, that he has left in his " Homer," a treasure of poetical elegancies to posterity. His version may be said to have tuned the English tongue; for, since its appearance, no writer, however deficient in other powers, has wanted melody. Such a series of lines so elaborately connected, and so sweetly modulated, took possession of the public ear; the vulgar were enamoured of the poem, and the learned wondered at the translation."

" Of the " Odyssey" nothing remains to be observed: the same general praise may be given to both translations, and a particular examination of either would require a large volume."

" Of the " Dunciad" the hint is confessedly taken from Dryden's " Mac Flecno;" but the plan is so enlarged and diversified as justly to claim the praise of an original, and affords perhaps the best specimen that has yet appeared of personal satire ludicrously pompous."

" The " Essay on Man" was a work of great labour and long consideration, but certainly not the happiest of Pope's performances."

Dr. Johnson, after condemning its principles, goes on to say, " If I had undertaken to exemplify Pope's felicity of composition before a rigid critick, I should not select the " Essay on Man;" for it contains more lines unsuccessfully laboured, more harshness of diction, more levity without elegance, and more heaviness without strength, than will be easily found in all his other works."

" The Characters of Men and Women" are the product of diligent speculation upon human life; much labour has been bestowed upon them, and Pope very seldom laboured in vain."

" After

" After all this, it is ſurely ſuperfluous to anſwer the queſtion that has once been aſked, whether Pope was a poet? otherwiſe than by aſking in return, if Pope be not a poet, where is poetry to be found? To circumſcribe poetry by a definition will only ſhow the narrowneſs of the definer, though a definition which ſhall exclude Pope will not eaſily be made. Let us look round upon the preſent time, and back upon the paſt; let us enquire to whom the voice of mankind has decreed the wreath of poetry; let their productions be examined, and their claims ſtated, and the pretenſions of Pope will be no more diſputed. Had he given the world only his verſion, the name of poet muſt have been allowed him: If the writer of the " Iliad" were to claſs his ſucceſſor, he would aſſign a very high place to his tranſlator, without requiring any other evidence of genius."

Dr. Johnſon next inveſtigates the merits of Pope's epitaphs, moſt of which he ſeverely cenſures. He conſiders the moſt valuable among them to be that " On Mrs. Corbet, who died of a Cancer in her Breaſt." With this criticiſm he cloſes what he ſays of Mr. Pope.

SWIFT.

JONATHAN SWIFT was, according to an account ſaid to be written by himſelf, the ſon of Jonathan Swift an attorney, and was born in Dublin, on St. Andrew's day, 1667. According to his own report, as delivered by Pope to Spence, he was born at Leiceſter, the ſon of a clergyman, who was miniſter of a pariſh in Herefordſhire. Whatever was his birth, his education was Iriſh. He was ſent at the age of ſix to the ſchool of Kilkenny, and in his

fifteenth year (1682) was admitted into the Univerſity of Dublin.

In his academical ſtudies he was either not diligent or not happy. He obtained his degree of Bachelor of Arts by *ſpecial favour*; a term uſed in that Univerſity to denote want of merit.

He reſolved from that time to ſtudy eight hours a day, and continued his induſtry for ſeven years, with what improvement is ſufficiently known. In this courſe of daily application he continued three years longer in Dublin, and in this time, it is ſaid, he drew the firſt ſketch of his "Tale of a Tub."

When he was about one and twenty (1680), being by the death of Godwin Swift, his uncle, who had ſupported him, left without ſubſiſtence, he went to conſult his mother, who then lived at Leiceſter, about his future courſe of life, and by her directions ſolicited the patronage of Sir William Temple, who had married one of Mrs. Swift's relations, and whoſe father, Sir John Temple, Maſter of the Rolls in Ireland, had lived in great familiarity of friendſhip with Godwin Swift.

Temple was ſo pleaſed with the nephew of his father's friend, that he detained him two years in his houſe. Here he became known to King William, who ſometimes viſited Temple when he was diſabled by the gout; and being attended by Swift in the garden, he ſhewed him how to cut aſparagus in the Dutch way.

When Temple removed to Moor-park, he took Swift with him, who was much oppreſſed with a giddineſs and deafneſs, a malady that purſued him through life, and at laſt ſent him to the grave, deprived of reaſon. He was adviſed to try his native air, and went to Ireland; but, finding no benefit, he returned to Sir William, at whoſe houſe he continued his ſtudies. He thought exerciſe of great neceſſity, and uſed to run half a mile up and down a hill every two hours.

He

He now resolved to become a Master of Arts at Oxford. In the testimonial which he produced, the words of disgrace were omitted, and he took his Master's degree (July 5, 1692) with such reception and regard as fully contented him.

While he lived with Temple he used to pay his mother at Leicester a yearly visit. He travelled on foot, unless some violent weather drove him into a waggon, and at night he would go to a penny lodging, where he purchased clean sheets for sixpence. In 1694 he quitted Moor-park with discontent.

He now resolved to enter into the church, and obtained in Ireland the prebend of *Kilroot* in Connor, of about one hundred pounds a year. Temple, conscious of having given reasons of complaint, invited him back, with a promise to procure him English preferment. With this request Swift quickly complied, and they lived on together in mutual satisfaction; and in the four years that passed between his return and Temple's death, it is probable that he wrote the "Tale of a Tub" and the "Battle of the Books."

Swift began early to think that he was a poet, and wrote Pindarick odes to Temple, to the King, and to the Athenian Society. It is said, that Dryden, having perused these verses, said "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet;" and that this denunciation was the motive of Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden.

In 1699 Temple died, and left a legacy, with his manuscripts, to Swift, for whom he had obtained from King William a promise of the first prebend that should be vacant at Westminster or Canterbury; but this promise the king forgot, although Swift endeavoured indirectly to call it to his recollection.

He was then invited by the Earl of Berkley to accompany him to Ireland as his private secretary; but after having done the business till their arrival at Dublin, he then found that one Bush had persuaded

the earl that a clergyman was not a proper ſecretary, and had obtained the office for himſelf. Swift was compelled to content himſelf with the livings of *Laracor* and *Rathbeggin* in the dioceſe of Meath.

Soon after his ſettlement at *Laracor* he invited to Ireland the unfortunate Stella, a young woman whoſe name was Johnſon, the daughter of the ſteward of Sir William Temple, who left her a thouſand pounds. With her came Mrs. Dingley, whoſe whole fortune was twenty-ſeven pounds a year for her life. With thoſe ladies he paſſed his hours of relaxation; but they never reſided in the ſame houſe, nor did he ſee either without a witneſs.

His firſt work, except his few poetical eſſays, was the "Diſſentions in Athens and Rome," publiſhed (1701) in his 34th year. Three years afterwards (1704) was publiſhed the "Tale of a Tub," and next the "Battle of the Books." It was not till about four years after this period that he became a profeſſed author, and then one year (1708) produced "The Sentiments of a Church of England Man;" the "Ridicule of Aſtrology," under the name of *Bickerſtaff*; the "Argument againſt aboliſhing Chriſtianity;" and the "Defence of the Sacramental Teſt."

In the year following he wrote a "Project for the Advancement of Religion." He wrote likewiſe this year a "Vindication of Bickerſtaff," and an explanation of an "Ancient Prophecy." Soon after began the buſy and important part of Swift's life. He was employed (1710) by the Primate of Ireland to ſolicit the Queen for a remiſſion of the firſt fruits and twentieth parts of the Iriſh clergy. With this purpoſe he had recourſe to Mr. Harley, who ſoon admitted him to familiarity, glad no doubt of having an auxiliary ſo well qualified for his ſervice. Swift was now immerging into political controverſy, for the ſame year produced the "Examiner," of which he wrote thirty-three papers.

Early

Early in the next year he publiſhed "A Propoſal for correcting, and aſcertaining the Engliſh Tongue," in a letter to the Earl of Oxford. He wrote the ſame year a "Letter to the October Club."

In the midſt of the controverſies between the Whigs and Tories he attained the zenith of his political importance. He publiſhed 1712 "The Conduct of the Allies," ten days before the parliament aſſembled. The purpoſe was, to perſuade the nation to a peace, and never had any writer more ſucceſs. The power of a political treatiſe depends much upon the diſpoſition of the people; the nation was then combuſtible, and a ſpark ſet it on fire. It is ſaid, that between November and January eleven thouſand were ſold.

This year (1712) he publiſhed his "Reflections on the Barrier Treaty." This was followed by "Remarks on the Biſhop of Sarum's Introduction to his third Volume of the Hiſtory of the Reformation."

Swift, being now the declared favourite and ſuppoſed confidant of the tory miniſtry, was treated by all who depended on the court with the reſpect which dependents know how to pay, In 1713 he accepted the deanery of St. Patrick, the beſt preferment that his friends could venture to give him, in conſequence of his performance of the "Tale of a Tub," levelled againſt the clergy, who in a great degree ſupported the miniſtry.

In the midſt of his power and his politicks he kept a journal of his viſits, his walks, his interviews with miniſters, and quarrels with his ſervants, and tranſmitted it to Mrs. Johnſon and Mrs. Dingley.

He went to take poſſeſſion of his deanery as ſoon as he had obtained it; but he was not ſuffered to ſtay in Ireland more than a fortnight before he was recalled to England, that he might reconcile Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, which he attempted in vain. Before this violent diſſention had ſhattered the

miniſtry, Swift had publiſhed in the beginning of the year (1714) "The public Spirit of the Whigs," in anſwer to the "Criſis," a pamphlet for which Steele was expelled the Houſe of Commons.

In this pamphlet the Scots were mentioned in terms ſo provoking to that irritable nation, that the Scotch Lords in a body demanded an audience of the Queen, and ſolicited reparation. A proclamation was iſſued, in which three hundred pounds were offered for diſcovery of the author. From this ſtorm he was, as he relates, *ſecured by a ſleight.* He was become ſo formidable to the whigs, that his familiarity with the miniſtry was clamoured at in parliament, particularly by two men, afterwards of great note, *Aiſlabie* and *Walpole.*

But, by the diſunion of his great friends, his importance and his deſigns were now at an end; and, ſeeing his ſervices at laſt uſeleſs, he retired about June (1714) into Berkſhire, where he wrote what was then ſuppreſſed, but has ſince appeared under the title of "Free Thoughts on the preſent State of Affairs."

While he was waiting in this retirement, the death of the Queen broke down at once the whole ſyſtem of tory politicks; and nothing remained but to withdraw from the implacability of triumphant whiggiſm and ſhelter himſelf in unenvied obſcurity. He therefore went over to Ireland; but, having ſo lately quitted the tumults of a party and the intrigues of a court, his thoughts were ſtill in agitation, and he made ſome hiſtorical attempts relating to the "Change of the Miniſters" and the "Conduct of the Miniſtry." He likewiſe is ſaid to have written a "Hiſtory of the four laſt Years of Queen Anne," which he began in her life time, and afterwards laboured with great attention, but never publiſhed.

He now conſidered himſelf in a ſtate of exile, and the thoughts of death ruſhed upon him, at this time, with

with ſuch inceſſant importunity, that they took poſſeſſion of his mind when he firſt waked for many years together.

He opened his houſe by a publick table two days a week; and found his entertainments gradually frequented by more and more viſitants of learning among the men, and of elegance among the women. Mrs. Johnſon had left the country, and lived in lodgings not far from the deanery. On his publick days ſhe regulated the table, but always appeared at it as a mere gueſt, like other ladies.

On other days he often dined, at a ſtated price, with Mr. Worral, a clergyman of his cathedral. To this frugal mode of living he was at firſt diſpoſed by care to pay ſome debts which he had contracted, and he continued it for the pleaſure of accumulating money.

Soon after (1716), in his forty-ninth year, he was privately married to Mrs. Johnſon by Dr. Aſhe, Biſhop of Clogher. The marriage made no change in their mode of life; they lived in different houſes as before; nor did ſhe ever lodge in the deanery but when Swift was ſeized with a fit of giddineſs. "It would be difficult," ſays Lord Orrery, "to prove that they were ever afterwards together without a third perſon."[2]

The Dean of St. Patrick's lived in a private manner, known and regarded only by his friends, till, about the year 1720, he by a pamphlet recommended to the Iriſh the uſe, and conſequently the improvement, of their manufacture. The tendency of the pamphlet being thought dangerous to the Engliſh trade, the printer was impriſoned; and the attention of the public being by this outrageous reſentment turned upon the propoſal, the author was by conſequence made popular.

In 1723 died Mrs. Van Homrigh, a woman made unhappy by her admiration of wit, and ignominiouſly diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Vaneſſa*. She was a young woman fond of literature, whom *Decanus* the *Dean*,

Dean, called *Cadenus* by tranſpoſition of the letters, took pleaſure in directing and inſtructing, till, from being proud of his praiſe, ſhe grew fond of his perſon. Whatever might be his conduct to her, ſhe thought herſelf neglected, and died of diſappointment.

The dean made a tour, as related by Delany, to the ſouth of Ireland, for about two months, at this time to diſſipate his thoughts, and give place to obloquy; and Stella retired to the houſe of a friend of the Dean's whom ſhe much loved and honoured.

The great acquiſition of eſteem and influence was made by the "Drapier's Letters" in 1724. One Wood, of Wolverhampton in Staffordſhire, had, as is ſaid, by a preſent to the Ducheſs of Munſter, obtained a patent empowering him to coin one hundred and eighty thouſand pounds of halfpence and farthings for the kingdom of Ireland, in which there was a great ſcarcity of copper coin. Swift, finding the metal which Wood had made uſe of much debaſed, wrote letters under the name of "M. B. Drapier," to ſhew the folly of receiving, and the miſchief that muſt enſue by giving gold and ſilver for coin worth perhaps not a third part of its nominal value.

The nation was alarmed; the new coin was univerſally refuſed. Lord Carteret and the Privy Council publiſhed a proclamation offering three hundred pounds for diſcovering the author of the fourth letter. Swift had concealed himſelf from his printer, and truſted only his butler, who tranſcribed the paper. The man, immediately after the appearance of the proclamation, ſtrolled from the houſe, and ſtaid out all night, and part of the next day. There was reaſon to fear that he had betrayed his maſter for the reward; but he came home, and the Dean ordered him to put off his livery and leave the houſe; "for," ſays he, "I know that my life is in your power, and I will not bear, out of fear, either your inſolence or negligence. The man

man excuſed his fault with great ſubmiſſion, and begged he might be confined in the houſe while it was in his power to endanger his maſter; but the Dean reſolutely turned him out, without taking further notice of him till the term of information expired, and then received him again. The integrity of the man, whoſe name was Blakeney, was rewarded with the ſituation of Verger of St. Patrick's.

From this time he was honoured by the populace as the champion, patron, and inſtructor of Ireland, and became amazingly popular. He was from this year the oracle of the traders, and the idol of the rabble. The pleaſure, however, of his popularity was ſoon interrupted by domeſtick miſery. Mrs. Johnſon, whoſe converſation was to him the great ſoftener of the ills of life, began in the year of the "Drapier's" triumph to decline; and two years afterwards was ſo waſted with ſickneſs, that her recovery was conſidered as hopeleſs. Swift was then in England, and had been invited by Lord Bolingbroke to paſs the winter with him in France; but this call of calamity haſtened him to Ireland, where perhaps his preſence contributed to reſtore her to imperfect and tottering health.

She was now ſo much at eaſe that (1727) he returned to England, where he collected three volumes of miſcellanies in conjunction with Pope. This important year ſent likewiſe into the world "Gulliver's Travels," a production ſo new and ſtrange that it filled the reader with a mingled emotion of merriment and amazement. While Swift was enjoying the reputation of his new work, the news of the king's death arrived, and he kiſſed the hands of the new king and queen three days after their acceſſion.

Not long after he was ſeized by a fit of giddineſs, and again heard of the ſickneſs and danger of Mrs. Johnſon. He then left Pope's houſe, as it ſeems with very little ceremony, and did not write to him till he found

found himſelf at Cheſter. He returned to a houſe of ſorrow: poor Stella was ſinking into the grave, and after a languiſhing delay of two months died in her forty-fourth year, January 28, 1728. How much he wiſhed her life his papers tell us. He never mentioned her without a ſigh.

The reſt of his life was ſpent in Ireland, in a country to which not even power almoſt deſpotick, nor flattery almoſt idolatrous, could reconcile him. He tells Pope, in the decline of life, that he hopes once more to ſee him; *but if not*, ſays he, *we muſt part, as all human beings have parted.*

After the death of Stella he drove his acquaintance from his table. But he continued his attention to the publick, and wrote from time to time ſuch directions, admonitions, or cenſures, as the various exigences of affairs, in his opinion, made proper. In a ſhort poem on the Preſbyterians, whom he always regarded with deteſtation, he beſtowed one ſtricture upon Betteſworth, a lawyer eminent for his inſolence to the clergy. Enraged, he went to Swift, and demanded whether he was the author of that poem. "Mr. Betteſworth," anſwered he, "I was in my youth acquainted with great lawyers, who, knowing my diſpoſition to ſatire, adviſed me, that, if any ſcoundrel or blockhead whom I had lampooned ſhould aſk, *Are you the author of this paper?* I ſhould tell him I was not the author; and therefore I tell you, Mr. Betteſworth, that I am not the author of theſe lines." Betteſworth was ſo little ſatisfied with this account, that he publicly profeſſed his reſolution of a corporal revenge; but the inhabitants of St. Patrick's diſtrict embodied themſelves in the Dean's defence.

Swift was popular a while by another mode of beneficence. He ſet aſide ſome hundreds to be lent in ſmall ſums to the poor, from five ſhillings to five pounds. He took no intereſt, and only required that,

at

at repayment, a ſmall fee ſhould be given to the accomptant; but he required that the day of promiſed payment ſhould be exactly kept. The day was often broken, and the loan was not repaid. He ordered his debtors to be ſued. The clamour againſt him was loud, and he was therefore forced to drop his ſcheme.

His former aſperity now continually increaſed and condemned him to ſolitude, and his reſentment of ſolitude ſharpened his aſperity. He was not, however, totally deſerted; ſome men of learning, and ſome women of elegance, often viſited him; and he wrote from time to time either verſe or proſe.

As his years increaſed, his fits of giddineſs and deafneſs grew more frequent, and his deafneſs made converſation difficult; they grew likewiſe more ſevere, till in 1736, as he was writing a poem called the "Legion Club," he was ſeized with a fit ſo painful, and ſo long continued, that he never after thought it proper to attempt any work of thought or labour.

He was always careful of his money, and was therefore no liberal entertainer; but was leſs frugal of his wine than of his meat. When his friends of either ſex came to him in expectation of a dinner, his cuſtom was to give every one a ſhilling, that they might pleaſe themſelves with their proviſion. At laſt he would refuſe even a bottle of wine.

Having thus excluded converſation, and deſiſted from ſtudy, he had neither buſineſs nor amuſement; for, having determined never to wear ſpectacles, he could make but little uſe of books in his later years: His ideas therefore, being neither renovated by diſcourſe nor increaſed by reading, wore gradually away, and left his mind vacant to the vexations of the hour, till at laſt his anger was heightened into madneſs.

He however permitted one book to be publiſhed, which had been the production of former years, "Polite

" Polite Converſation," which appeared in 1738. " The Directions for Servants" was printed ſoon after his death.

He grew more violent, and his mental powers declined, till (1741) it was found neceſſary that legal guardians ſhould be appointed to his perſon and fortune. His madneſs was compounded of rage and fatuity. The laſt face that he knew was that of Mrs. Whiteway, and her he ceaſed to know in a very little time. His meat was brought him cut into mouthfulls; but he would never touch it while the ſervant ſtaid, and at laſt, after it had ſtood perhaps an hour, would eat it walking; for he continued his old habit, and was on his feet ten hours a day.

Next year (1742) he had an inflammation in his left eye, which ſwelled it to the ſize of an egg, with boils in other parts; he was kept long waking with the pain, and was not eaſily reſtrained by five attendants from tearing out his eye.

The tumour at laſt ſubſided; and a ſhort interval of reaſon enſuing, in which he knew his phyſician and his family, gave hopes of his recovery; but in a few days he ſunk into lethargick ſtupidity, motionleſs, heedleſs, and ſpeechleſs. But it is ſaid, that, after a year of total ſilence, when his houſekeeper, on the 30th of November, told him that the uſual bonfires and illuminations were preparing to celebrate his birth-day, he anſwered, *It is all folly; they had better let it alone.*

It is remembered, that he afterwards ſpoke now and then, or gave ſome intimation of a meaning; but at laſt ſunk into perfect ſilence, which continued till about the end of October 1744, when, in his ſeventy-eighth year, he expired without a ſtruggle.

The following obſervations reſpect his proſe works, his perſon, and private habits.

" His " Tale of a Tub," ſays Johnſon, " has little reſemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence

vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copiouſneſs of images, and vivacity of diction, ſuch as he afterwards never poſſeſſed, or never exerted."

"In his other works is found an equable tenour of eaſy language, which rather trickles than flows. His delight was in ſimplicity. That he has in his works no metaphor, as has been ſaid, is not true; but his few metaphors ſeemed to be received rather by neceſſity than choice. He ſtudied purity; and though perhaps all his ſtrictures are not exact, yet it is not often that ſoleciſms can be found; and whoever depends on his authority may generally conclude himſelf ſafe. His ſentences are never too much dilated or contracted."

"His ſtyle was well ſuited to his thoughts, which are never ſubtilized by nice diſquiſitions, decorated by ſparkling conceits, elevated by ambitious ſentences, or variegated by far-ſought learning.

"Of his duty as a Dean he was very obſervant. He managed the revenues of his church with exact œconomy; and it is ſaid by Delany, that more money was under his direction laid out in repairs than had ever been in the ſame time ſince its firſt erection. Of his choir he was eminently careful; and, though he neither loved nor underſtood muſick, he took care that all the ſingers were well qualified.

"He came to church every morning, preached commonly in his turn, and attended the evening anthem, that it might not be negligently performed.

"He read the ſervice *rather with a ſtrong nervous voice than in a graceful manner*; *his voice was ſharp and high-toned, rather than harmonious.*

"He entered upon the clerical ſtate with hope to excel in preaching; but complained, that from the time of his political controverſies *he could only preach pamphlets.*

"The

" The perſon of Swift had not many recommendations. He had a kind of muddy complexion, which, though he waſhed himſelf with oriental ſcrupuloſity, did not look clear. He had a countenance ſour and ſevere, which he ſeldom ſoftened by any appearance of gaiety. He ſtubbornly reſiſted any tendency to laughter.

" To his domeſticks he was naturally rough; and a man of rigorous temper, with that vigilance of minute attention which his works diſcover, muſt have been a maſter that few could bear.

" He did not ſpare the ſervants of others. Once, when he dined alone with the Earl of Orrery, he ſaid, of one that waited in the room, *That man has, ſince we ſat at table, committed fifteen faults.*

" In his œconomy he practiſed a peculiar and offenſive parſimony, without diſguiſe or apology.

" He was frugal by inclination, but liberal by principle; and if the purpoſe to which he deſtined his little accumulations be remembered, with his diſtribution of occaſional charity, it will perhaps appear, that he only liked one mode of expence better than another, and ſaved only that he might have ſomething to give."

" He told ſtories with great felicity, and delighted in doing what he knew himſelf to do well. He was therefore captivated by the reſpectful ſilence of a ſteady liſtener, and told the ſame tale too often.

" He did not, however, claim the right of talking alone; for it was his rule, when he had ſpoken a minute, to give room by a pauſe for any other ſpeaker."

" In the poetical works of Dr. Swift there is not much upon which the critick can exerciſe his powers. They are often humorous, almoſt always light, and have the qualities which recommend ſuch compoſitions, eaſineſs and gaiety. They are, for the moſt part, what their author intended. The diction is correct, the numbers are ſmooth, and the rhymes exact. There

ſeldom

ſeldom occur a hard-laboured expreſſion or a redundant epithet; all his verſes exemplify his own definition of a good ſtile, they conſiſt of *proper words in proper places.*

"To divide this collection into claſſes, and ſhew how ſome pieces are groſs, and ſome are trifling, would be to tell the reader what he knows already, and to find faults of which the author could not be ignorant, who certainly wrote often not to his judgment, but his humour.

"It was ſaid in a preface to one of his Iriſh editions, that Swift had never been known to take a ſingle thought from any writer ancient or modern. This is not literally true; but perhaps no writer can eaſily be found that has borrowed ſo little, or that in all his excellencies and all his defects has ſo well maintained his claim to be conſidered as original."

GAY.

JOHN GAY, deſcended from an old family that had been long in poſſeſſion of the manor of Goldſworthy in Devonſhire, was born in 1688, at or near Barnſtaple, where he was educated by Mr. Luck. Being born without proſpect of hereditary riches, he was ſent to London in his youth and placed apprentice with a ſilk-mercer. It is ſaid, he was ſoon weary of either the reſtraint or ſervility of his occupation, and eaſily perſuaded his maſter to diſcharge him.

The Dutcheſs of Monmouth in 1712 took Gay into her ſervice as Secretary. Of the leiſure which he had he made ſo good uſe, that he publiſhed next year a poem on "Rural Sports," and inſcribed it to Mr. Pope.

Pope. Pope was pleaſed with the honour, and in conſequence a friendſhip was formed between them, which laſted to their ſeparation by death, without any known abatement on either ſide.

Next year he publiſhed "The Shepherd's Week," ſix Engliſh paſtorals. They were read with delight as juſt repreſentations of rural manners and occupations. In 1713 he brought a Comedy called "The Wife of Bath" upon the ſtage, but it received no applauſe. In the laſt year of Queen Anne's life he was made Secretary to the Earl of Clarendon, Ambaſſador to the court of Hanover. This was a ſtation that naturally gave him hopes of kindneſs from every party; but the queen's death put an end to her favours.

On the arrival of the Princeſs of Wales he wrote a poem, and obtained ſo much notice, that both the Prince and Princeſs went to ſee his "What d'ye call It," a kind of mock tragedy, which was much favoured by the audience. Not long afterwards (1717) he endeavoured to entertain the town with "Three Hours after Marriage;" a comedy written, as it is thought, by the joint aſſiſtance of Pope and Arbuthnot, but it was driven off the ſtage with general condemnation.

Gay is repreſented as a man eaſily incited to hope, and deeply depreſſed when his hopes were diſappointed. In conſequence of this laſt failure, he ſunk into dejection. His friends tried to divert him. The Earl of Burlington ſent him (1716) into Devonſhire; the year after, Mr. Pulteney took him to Aix, and in the following year Lord Harcourt invited him to his ſeat, where, during his viſit, two rural lovers were killed with lightning, as is particularly told in Pope's letters.

Being now generally known, he publiſhed (1720) his poems by ſubſcription, with ſuch ſucceſs that he raiſed a thouſand pounds, by which he was adviſed by Pope and Swift to purchaſe an annuity. In that diſaſtrous

aſtrous year he had a preſent from young Craggs of ſome South Sea ſtock. His friends perſuaded him to ſell his ſhare; but this counſel was rejected; the profit and principal were loſt, and he ſunk under the calamity ſo low that his life became in danger.

By the care of his friends, among whom Pope appears to have ſhewn particular tenderneſs, his health was reſtored; and, returning to his ſtudies, he wrote a tragedy called "The Captives," which he was invited to read before the Princeſs of Wales. When the hour came, he ſaw the Princeſs and her ladies all in expectation, and advancing with reverence, too great for any other attention, ſtumbled at a ſtool, and falling forwards, threw down a weighty japan ſcreen. The Princeſs ſtarted, the ladies ſcreamed, and poor Gay, after all the diſturbance, was ſtill to read his play.

It was acted at Drury-lane in 1723, but with very little ſucceſs. In 1726 he undertook to write a volume of "Fables" for the improvement of the young Duke of Cumberland, for which he is ſaid to have been promiſed a reward.

Next year the Prince and Princeſs became King and Queen, and Gay was appointed Gentleman Uſher to the Princeſs Louiſa. By this offer he thought himſelf inſulted, his mind being fixed on higher promotion, and ſent a meſſage to the Queen that he was too old for the place. Great intereſt was made to gain him greater preferment, but ſolicitations, verſes, and flatteries were thrown away.

His mind was now relieved from the pains of this neglect of the court by the unexampled ſucceſs of the "Beggar's Opera." This play, written in ridicule of the muſical Italian drama, was firſt offered to Cibber, and rejected; being then carried to Rich, it had the effect, as was ludicrouſly ſaid, of *making* Gay *rich* and

and Rich *gay*. Pope ſays in one of his notes in the "Dunciad," that it was acted in London ſixty-three nights without interruption, and renewed the next ſeaſon with equal applauſe; it alſo ſpread into all the great towns of England; and was played in many places to the thirtieth and fortieth time; at Bath and Briſtol fifty, &c. It made its progreſs into Wales, Scotland and Ireland, where it was performed twenty-four days ſucceſſively.

Of this performance, when it was printed, the reception was by no means ſo great. Dr. Herring, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, among others, cenſured it as giving encouragement not only to vice but to crimes, by making a highwayman the hero, and diſmiſſing him at laſt unpuniſhed. This objection, or ſome other rather political than moral, obtained ſuch prevalence, that when Gay produced a ſecond part under the name of "Polly," it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain; and he was forced to recompence his repulſe by a ſubſcription, which is ſaid to have been ſo liberally beſtowed, that what he called oppreſſion ended in profit. The publication was ſo much favoured, that though the firſt part gained him four hundred pounds, near thrice as much was the profit of the ſecond.

He received yet another recompence for his ſuppoſed hardſhip, in the affectionate attention of the Duke and Ducheſs of Queenſbury, into whoſe houſe he was taken, and with whom he paſſed the remaining part of his life. The duke, conſidering his want of œconomy, undertook the management of his money, and gave it to him as he wanted it. But it is ſuppoſed that the diſcountenance of the court ſunk deep into his heart, and gave him more diſcontent than the applauſes or tenderneſs of his friends could overpower. He ſoon fell into his old diſtemper, an habitual colick, and languiſhed, though with many intervals

tervals of eaſe and cheerfulneſs, till a violent fit at laſt ſeized him, and hurried him to the grave, as Arbuthnot reported, with more precipitance than he had ever known. He died the 4th of Dec. 1732, and was buried in Weſtminſter Abbey. The letter which brought an account of his death to Swift was laid by for ſome days unopened, becauſe when he received it he was impreſſed with the preconception of ſome misfortune.

After his death, was publiſhed a ſecond volume of Fables more political than the former. His opera of Achilles was acted, and the profits were given to two widow ſiſters, who inherited what he left as his lawful heirs, for he died without a will, though he had gathered three thouſand pounds. There have alſo appeared under his name a comedy called the "Diſtreſt Wife," and the "Rehearſal at Gotham," a piece of humour.

"As a poet, he cannot be rated very high. He was, as I once heard a female critick remark, *of a lower order*. He had not in any great degree the *mens divinior*, the dignity of genius. Much however muſt be allowed to the author of a new ſpecies of compoſition, though it be not of the higheſt kind. We owe to Gay the Ballad Opera; a mode of comedy which at firſt was ſuppoſed to delight only by its novelty, but has now by the experience of half a century been found ſo well accommodated to the diſpoſition of a popular audience, that it is likely to keep long poſſeſſion of the ſtage."

"—— His firſt performance the "Rural Sports" is ſuch as was eaſily planned and executed; it is never contemptible, nor ever excellent. The "Fan" is one of thoſe mythological fictions which antiquity delivers ready to the hand; but which, like other things that lie open to every one's uſe, are of little value. The attention naturally retires from a new tale of Venus, Diana, and Minerva.

" His Fables ſeem to have been a favourite work; for, having publiſhed one volume, he left another behind him."

" —— They are however told with livelineſs; the verſification is ſmooth, and the diction, though now-and-then a little conſtrained by the meaſure or the rhyme, is generally happy.

" To " Trivia" may be allowed all that it claims; it is ſprightly, various, and pleaſant."

" —— Of his little poems the publick judgment ſeems to be right; they are neither much eſteemed, nor totally deſpiſed.

BROOME.

WILLIAM BROOME was born in Cheſhire, as is ſaid, of very mean parents. The place of his birth, or the firſt part of his life, is not exactly known. He was educated upon the foundation at Eton, and was Captain of the School a whole year, without any vacancy by which he might have obtained a ſcholarſhip at King's College. Being by this delay ſuperannuated, he was ſent to St. John's College by the contributions of his friends, where he obtained a ſmall exhibition.

At college his addiction to metre was ſuch, that his companions familiarly called him *poet*. He appeared early in the world as a tranſlator of the " Iliad" into proſe in conjunction with Ozel and Oldiſworth. He was introduced to Mr. Pope, who was then viſiting Sir John Cotton at Madingly near Cambridge, and gained ſo much of his eſteem, that he was employed, it is ſaid, to make extracts from " Euſtathius" for the notes to the tranſlation of the " Iliad;" and in the volumes

volumes of poetry published by Lintot, commonly called "Pope's Miscellanies," many of his early pieces were inserted.

When the success of the "Iliad" gave encouragement to a version of the "Odyssey," Pope, weary of the toil, called Fenton and Broome to his assistance; and, taking only half the work upon himself, divided the other half between his partners, giving four books to Fenton and eight to Broome. To the lot of Broome fell the 2d, 6th, 8th, 11th, 12th, 16th, 18th, and 23d, together with the burden of writing all the notes.

The price at which Pope purchased this assistance was three hundred pounds paid to Fenton, and five hundred pounds to Broome, with as many copies as he wanted for his friends, which amounted to one hundred more. He afterwards published a "Miscellany of Poems," which is inserted, with corrections, in the new compilation of his works.

He never rose to very high dignity in the Church. He was some time Rector of Sturston in Suffolk, were he married a wealthy widow; and afterwards when the king visited Cambridge (1728) became Doctor of Laws. He was (1733) presented by the crown to the Rectory of *Pulham* in *Norfolk*, which he held with *Oakley Magna* in *Suffolk*, given him by the Lord Cornwallis to whom he was chaplain, and who added the vicarage of *Eye* in *Suffolk*; he then resigned *Pulham*, and retained the other two.

Towards the close of his life he amused himself with translating Odes of Anacreon, which he published in the "Gentleman's Magazine," under the name of *Chester*.

He died at Bath, Nov. 16, 1745, and was buried in the Abbey Church.

"Of Broome, though it cannot be said that he was a great poet, it would be unjust to deny that he was an

excellent verſifyer; his lines are ſmooth and ſonorous, and his diction is ſelect and elegant. His rhymes are ſometimes unſuitable; in his "Melancholy" he makes *breath* rhyme to *birth* in one place, and to *earth* in another. Thoſe faults occur but ſeldom; and he had ſuch power of words and numbers as fitted him for tranſlation; but in his original works, recollection ſeems to have been his buſineſs more than invention. His imitations are ſo apparent, that it is part of his reader's employment to recall the verſes of ſome former poet. Sometimes he copies the moſt popular writers, for he ſeems ſcarcely to endeavour at concealment; and ſometimes he picks up fragments in obſcure corners."

"—— To detect his imitations were tedious and uſeleſs. What he takes he ſeldom makes worſe; and he cannot be juſtly thought a mean man whom Pope choſe for an aſſociate, and whoſe co-operation was conſidered by Pope's enemies as ſo important that he was attacked by Henley with this ludicrous diſtich;

> Pope came off clean with Homer; but they ſay
> Broome went before, and kindly ſwept the way.

PITT.

CHRISTOPHER PITT was born in 1699 at Blandford, the ſon of a phyſician much eſteemed. He was, in 1714, received as a ſcholar into Wincheſter College, where he was diſtinguiſhed by exerciſes of uncommon elegance; and at his removal to New College in 1719, preſented to the electors, as the product of his private and voluntary ſtudies, a complete verſion of "Lucan's Poem," which he did not then

then know to have been tranſlated by Rowe. When he had reſided at his college three years, he was preſented to the rectory of Pimpern in Dorſetſhire (1722) by his relation, Mr. Pitt of Stratfieldſea in Hampſhire; and, reſigning his fellowſhip, continued at Oxford two years longer, till he became Maſter of Arts (1724).

He probably about this time tranſlated "Vida's Art of Poetry." In this tranſlation he diſtinguiſhed himſelf, both by its general elegance, and by the ſkilful adaptation of his numbers to the images expreſſed. He then retired to his living, where he paſſed the reſt of his life, reverenced for his virtue, and beloved for the ſoftneſs of his temper and the eaſineſs of his manners.

At what time he compoſed his "Miſcellany," publiſhed in 1727, it is not neceſſary to know. The ſucceſs of his "Vida" animated him to a higher undertaking, and in his thirtieth year he publiſhed a verſion of the firſt book of the "Æneid." He ſome time afterwards added three or four more. At laſt he gave us a complete "Engliſh Æneid," which, joined to that of Dryden's, Johnſon declares to be *the two beſt tranſlations that perhaps were ever produced by one nation of the ſame author.*

He did not long enjoy the reputation which this great work deſervedly conferred; for he left the world in 1748, and is buried at Blandford.

PARNELL.

THOMAS PARNELL was the ſon of a commonwealth's man, who at the Reſtoration left Congleton in Cheſhire, and, ſettling in Ireland, purchaſed an eſtate, which, with his lands in Cheſhire, deſcended to the poet, who was born in Dublin in 1679, and,

after the uſual education of a Grammar-ſchool, was at the age of thirteen admitted into the college, where in 1700 he became Maſter of Arts; and was the ſame year ordained a deacon, though under the canonical age, by a diſpenſation from the Biſhop of Derry.

About three years afterwards he was made a prieſt; and in 1705, Dr. Aſhe, the Biſhop of Clogher, conferred upon him the Archdeaconry of Clogher. About the ſame time he married Mrs. Anne Minchin, an amiable lady, by whom he had two ſons who died young, and a daughter who long ſurvived him.

At the ejection of the whigs, in the end of Queen Anne's reign, Parnell was perſuaded to change his party, and was received by the new miniſtry as a valuable reinforcement. He was deſirous to make himſelf conſpicuous, and to ſhew how worthy he was of high preferment; as he thought himſelf qualified to become a popular preacher, he diſplayed his elocution with great ſucceſs in the pulpits of London; but the Queen's death, putting an end to his expectations, abated his diligence: and Pope repreſents him as falling from that time into intemperance of wine. This is imputed to the untimely death of a darling ſon; or, as others ſay, the loſs of his wife, who died (1712) in the midſt of his expectations.

He was now warmly recommended by Swift to Archbiſhop King, who gave him a Prebend in 1713; and in May 1716 preſented him to the vicarage of Finglaſs in the dioceſe of Dublin, worth four hundred pounds a year. Such notice from ſuch a man may make one reaſonably believe, that the vice of which he has been accuſed was either not groſs or not notorious.

But his proſperity did not laſt long. His end, whatever was its cauſe, was now approaching. He enjoyed his preferment little more than a year; for in July

July 1717, in his thirty-eighth year, he died at Chester, on his way to Ireland.

Johnson informs us, that the above account of Parnell is extracted from Goldsmith's life of that poet.

As a writer, the great critic thus characterises him: "The Night-piece on Death" is indirectly preferred by Goldsmith to "Gray's Church-yard;" but in my opinion Gray has the advantage in dignity, variety, and originality of sentiment. He observes, that the story of the "Hermit" is in "More's Dialogues" and "Howell's Letters," and supposes it to be originally *Arabian*.

"Goldsmith has not taken any notice of the "Elegy to the Old Beauty," which is perhaps the meanest, nor of the "Allegory on Man," the happiest of Parnell's performances. The hint of the "Hymn to Contentment" I suspect to have been borrowed from Cleiveland.

"The general character of Parnell is not great extent of comprehension, or fertility of mind. Of the little that appears, still less is his own. His praise must be derived from the easy sweetness of his diction: in his verses there is *more happiness than pains*; he is sprightly without effort, and always delights though he never ravishes; every thing is proper, yet every thing seems casual. If there is some appearance of elaboration in the "Hermit," the narrative, as it is less airy, is less pleasing."

AMBROSE PHILIPS.

THE birth or early part of the life of Ambroſe Philips is not known. His academical education he received at St. John's College in Cambridge, where he firſt ſolicited the notice of the world by ſome Engliſh verſes in the collection publiſhed by the Univerſity on the death of Queen Mary.

From this time, how he was employed, or in what ſtation he paſſed his life, is not yet diſcovered. He muſt have publiſhed his Paſtorals before the year 1708, becauſe they are evidently prior to thoſe of Pope.

He afterwards (1709) addreſſed to the univerſal patron, the Duke of Dorſet, "A Poetical Letter from Cambridge," which was publiſhed in the "Tatler," and is by Pope, in one of his firſt letters, mentioned with high praiſe, as the production of a man *who could write very nobly.*

After tranſlating the "Perſian Tales," he was employed in promoting the principles of his party (the Whigs) by epitomizing Hacket's "Life of Archbiſhop Williams." In 1712 he brought upon the ſtage the "Diſtreſt Mother," almoſt a tranſlation of Racine's "Andromaque." Before the appearance of the play a whole "Spectator" was devoted to its praiſe; while it continued to be acted, another "Spectator" was written. On the firſt night a ſelect audience, ſays Pope, was called together to applaud it. It was concluded with the moſt ſucceſsful Epilogue that was ever ſpoken on the Engliſh Theatre. The three firſt nights it was recited twice; and not only continued to be demanded through the run, but whenever it is recalled

to

to the ſtage, where, by peculiar fortune, it yet keeps its place, the Epilogue is ſtill expected, and is ſtill ſpoken. The reputed author of it was Budgel, but the real one Addiſon.

Philips was now high in the ranks of literature. His tranſlations from Sappho were firſt publiſhed in the "Spectator." But the work which had procured him the firſt notice from the publick was his ſix Paſtorals. Not long afterwards Pope made the firſt diſplay of his powers in four Paſtorals, written in a very different form. Philips had taken Spenſer, and Pope took Virgil for his pattern. Philips endeavoured to be natural, Pope laboured to be elegant. A compariſon of theſe performances was made, and at laſt a controverſy enſued between the two poets, which ended in their perpetual enmity.

When upon the ſucceſſion of the Houſe of Hanover every Whig expected to be happy, Philips ſeems to have obtained too little notice. He was only made a Commiſſioner of the Lottery (1717) and a Juſtice of the Peace. In 1721 he produced another tragedy called "The Briton," which, whatever was its reception, is now neglected, as is alſo one, which appeared the ſame year, founded on the ſtory of "Humphry Duke of Glouceſter."

His happieſt undertaking was of a paper called the "Freethinker," in conjunction with aſſociates, of whom one was Doctor Boulter, who, from being only miniſter of a pariſh in Southwark, was made Biſhop of Briſtol, and afterwards Primate of Ireland. When he was advanced to the height of eccleſiaſtical dignity, he did not forget the companion of his labours. Knowing Philips to be ſlenderly ſupported, he took him to Ireland as partaker of his fortune, and, making him his ſecretary, added ſuch preferments as enabled him to repreſent the county of Armagh in the Iriſh Parliament. In December 1726 he was made

Secretary to the Lord Chancellor, and in Auguſt 1733 became Judge of the Prerogative Court.

After the death of his patron he continued ſome years in Ireland; but at laſt longing, as it ſeems, for his native country, he returned (1748) to London, having doubtleſs ſurvived moſt of his friends and enemies, and amongſt them his dreaded antagoniſt Pope. He found however the Duke of Newcaſtle ſtill living, and to him he dedicated his poems collected into a volume.

Having purchaſed an annuity of 400l. he now certainly hoped to paſs ſome years of life in plenty and tranquillity; but his hope deceived him: he was ſtruck with a palſy, and died June 18, 1749, in his 78th year.

" Of his perſonal character," ſays Johnſon, " all that I have heard is, that he was eminent for bravery and ſkill in the ſword, and that in converſation he was ſolemn and pompous."

" ——Of the " Diſtreſt Mother" not much is pretended to be his own, and therefore it is no ſubject of criticiſm: his other two tragedies, I believe, are not below mediocrity, nor above it. Among his poems the " Letter from Denmark" may be juſtly praiſed; the " Paſtorals," which by the writer of the " Guardian" were ranked as one of the four genuine productions of the ruſtick muſe, cannot ſurely be deſpicable."

" ——In his other poems he cannot be denied the praiſe of lines ſometimes elegant; but he has ſeldom much force, or much comprehenſion."

" In his tranſlations from Pindar, he found the art of reaching all the obſcurity of the Theban bard, however he may fall below his ſublimity; he will be allowed, if he has leſs fire, to have more ſmoke.

" He has added nothing to Engliſh poetry, yet at leaſt half his book deſerves to be read: perhaps he valued moſt himſelf that part which the critick would reject."

WATTS.

WATTS.

ISAAC WATTS was born July 1674 at Southampton, where his father kept a boarding ſchool for young gentlemen, though common report makes him a ſhoemaker. He was however neither indigent nor illiterate.

Iſaac, the eldeſt of nine children, was given to books from his infancy; and began, we are told, to learn Latin when he was four years old, at home. He was afterwards taught Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, by the maſter of the free-ſchool at Southampton, to whom the gratitude of the ſcholar afterwards inſcribed a Latin Ode.

His proficiency at ſchool was ſo conſpicuous, that a ſubſcription was propoſed for his ſupport at the univerſity; but he declared his reſolution to take his lot with the Diſſenters. He therefore repaired in 1690 to an academy taught by Mr. Rowe, where he had for his fellow ſtudents Mr. Hughes the poet, and Dr. Hoit, afterwards archbiſhop of Tuam. Some Latin Eſſays, ſuppoſed to have been written as exerciſes at this academy, ſhew a degree of knowledge, both philoſophical and theological, ſuch as very few attain by a much longer courſe of ſtudy.

He was, as he hints in his miſcellanies, a maker of verſes from fifteen to fifty; and in his youth he appears to have paid attention to Latin poetry. His verſes to his brother, written when he was ſeventeen, are remarkably eaſy and elegant. His method of ſtudy was to impreſs the contents of his books upon his memory by abridging them, and by interleaving them to amplify one ſyſtem with ſupplements from another.

At the age of twenty he left the academy, and ſpent two years in ſtudy and devotion at the houſe of his father, who treated him with great tenderneſs, and had the happineſs, indulged to few parents, of living to ſee his ſon eminent for literature and venerable for piety. He was then entertained by Sir John Hartop five years, as domeſtick tutor to his ſon; and in that time particularly devoted himſelf to the ſtudy of the holy ſcriptures; and, being choſen aſſiſtant to Dr. Chauncey, preached the firſt time on the birth-day that completed his twenty-fourth year.

In about three years he ſucceeded Dr. Chauncey; but ſoon after his entrance on his charge, he was ſeized by a dangerous illneſs, which ſunk him to ſuch weakneſs, that the congregation thought an aſſiſtant neceſſary, and appointed Mr. Price. His health then returned gradually, and he performed his duty till (1712) he was ſeized by a fever of ſuch violence and continuance, that from the feebleneſs which it brought upon him he never perfectly recovered.

This calamitous ſtate drew upon him the attention of Sir Thomas Abney, who received him into his houſe, where he was treated for thirty-ſix years with all the kindneſs that friendſhip could prompt, and all the attention that reſpect could dictate. Sir Thomas died about eight years afterwards; but he continued with the lady and her daughters to the end of life. The lady died about a year after him.

From the time of his reception into this family, his life was no otherwiſe diverſified than by ſucceſſive publications. The number and variety of his works ſhew the intenſeneſs of his induſtry, and the extent of his capacity. He was one of the firſt authors that taught the Diſſenters to court attention by the graces of language. He continued to the end of his life the teacher of a congregation. In the pulpit, though his low ſtature, which very little exceeded

ceeded five feet, graced him with no advantages of appearance, yet the gravity and propriety of his utterance made his discourses very efficacious.

Of his philosophical pieces, his Logick has been received into the Universities, and therefore wants no private recommendation. In his metaphysical disquisitions, it was observed by the late learned Mr. Dyer, that he confounded the idea of *space* with that of *empty space*; and did not consider, that though space might be without matter, yet matter being extended could not be without space. Few books of the kind have been perused with greater pleasure than his "Improvement of the Mind," of which the radical principles may be found in Locke's "Conduct of the Understanding;" but they are so expanded by Watts, as to confer upon him the merit of a work in the highest degree useful and pleasing. Whoever has the care of instructing others may be charged with deficience in his duty if this book is not recommended.

In 1720 he received from Edinburgh and Aberdeen an unsolicited diploma by which he became a Doctor of Divinity. He continued many years to study and to preach, and to do good by his instructions and example, till at last being disabled by the infirmities of age from doing his public duty, he offered to remit the salary appendant to it; but his congregation would not accept the resignation.

By degrees his weakness increased, and at last confined him to his chamber and his bed; where he was worn gradually away without pain, till he expired November 25, 1748, in the 75th year of his age.

"Few men have left behind such purity of character or such monuments of laborious piety. He has provided instruction for all ages, from those who are lisping their first lessons to the enlightened readers of Malbranche and Locke; he has left neither corporeal

poreal nor ſpiritual nature unexamined; he has taught the art of reaſoning, and the ſcience of the ſtars.

" ——As a poet, had he been only a poet, he would probably have ſtood high among the authors with whom he is now aſſociated. For his judgment was exact, and he noted beauties and faults with very nice diſcernment; his imagination, as the " Dacian Battle" proves, was vigorous and active, and the ſtores of knowledge were large by which his imagination was to be ſupplied. His ear was well-tuned, and his diction was elegant and copious. But his devotional poetry is, like that of others, unſatisfactory. The paucity of its topicks enforces perpetual repetition, and the ſanctity of the matter rejects the ornaments of figurative diction. It is ſufficient for Watts to have done better than others what no man has done ſo well.

" His poems on other ſubjects ſeldom riſe higher than might be expected from the amuſements of a man of letters."

SAVAGE.

IN the year 1697, Anne Counteſs of Macclesfield, having lived for ſome time upon very uneaſy terms with her huſband, thought a publick confeſſion of adultery the moſt expeditious method of obtaining her liberty, and therefore declared, that the child, with which ſhe was then pregnant, was begotten by the Earl of Rivers. This, as may be eaſily imagined, made her huſband no leſs deſirous of a ſeparation than herſelf, and accordingly on the third of March he was parted from his wife, a bill having paſſed for that purpoſe, although there was no divorce obtained in the ſpiritual court, and her fortune, which was very great,

great, was repaid her. Having, as well as her husband, the liberty of making another choice, she in a short time married Colonel Bret.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was prosecuting this affair, his wife was, on the tenth of January 1697-8, delivered of a son, and the Earl of Rivers, considering him as his own, unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, who, whatever were her motives, no sooner was her son born, than she discovered a resolution of disowning him; and in a very short time removed him from her sight, by committing him to the care of a poor woman, whom she directed to educate him as her own, and injoined never to inform him of his true parents.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the same cruelty. As it was impossible to avoid the enquiries which the curiosity or tenderness of her relations made after the child, she was obliged to give some account of the measures she had taken; and her mother, the Lady Mason, engaged to transact with the nurse, to pay her for her care, and to superintend the education of the child.

In this charitable office she was assisted by his godmother Mrs. Lloyd, who, while she lived, always looked upon him with that tenderness which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly necessary; but her death, which happened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his childhood; for, though she kindly endeavoured to alleviate his loss by a legacy of 300l. yet, as he had none to prosecute his claim, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was, however, not wholly abandoned. The Lady Mason still continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a small grammar-school near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurse, without the least intimation that he had a claim to any

any other. While he was thus initiated in literature, his father the Earl of Rivers was ſeized with a diſtemper, which in a ſhort time put an end to his life. He had frequently, but in vain, enquired after his ſon; but being now on his death-bed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a poſitive account of him. His mother, who could no longer refuſe an anſwer, determined at leaſt to give ſuch as ſhould cut him off for ever from that happineſs which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead; which is perhaps the firſt inſtance of a lie invented by a mother to deprive her ſon of a proviſion which was deſigned him by another, and which ſhe could not expect herſelf though he ſhould loſe it. The earl could not ſuſpect ſuch an act of wickedneſs, and therefore beſtowed upon ſome other perſon 6000 l. which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

His mother now endeavoured to rid herſelf from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by ſending him ſecretly to the American plantations; but, by what means are not known, this ſcheme was counteracted. Being however hindered from baniſhing him into another country, ſhe formed ſoon after a ſcheme for burying him in poverty and obſcurity in his own. She therefore ordered him to be placed with a ſhoemaker in Holborn, that, after the uſual time of trial, he might become his apprentice. It is generally reported, that this project was for ſome time ſucceſsful, and that Savage was employed at the awl, when an unexpected diſcovery determined him to quit his occupation.

About this period his nurſe, who had always treated him as her own ſon, died; and it was natural for him to take care of thoſe effects which by her death were, as he imagined, become his own; he therefore went to her houſe, opened her boxes, and examined her papers,

papers, amongſt which he found ſome letters written to her by the Lady Maſon, which informed him of his birth, and the reaſons for which it was concealed. He was now no longer ſatisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to ſhare the affluence of his mother; and therefore without ſcruple applied to her as her ſon, and made uſe of every art to awaken her tenderneſs and attract her regard. But neither his letters, nor the interpoſition of his friends, made any impreſſion upon her mind. She ſtill reſolved to neglect, though ſhe could no longer diſown him.

It was to no purpoſe that he frequently ſolicited her to admit him to ſee her---ſhe ordered him to be excluded her houſe; but Savage was at the ſame time ſo touched with the diſcovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings for ſeveral hours before her door, in hopes of ſeeing her as ſhe might come by accident to the window, or croſs her apartment with a candle in her hand. All his aſſiduity, however, was without effect, for he could neither ſoften her heart nor open her hand, and was reduced to the utmoſt miſeries of want, while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother: He was obliged therefore to ſeek ſome other means of ſupport, and, having no profeſſion, became by neceſſity an author.

Among the innumerable pamphlets to which the Bangorian controverſy gave occaſion, we find a poem by Savage againſt the biſhop. In his eighteenth year he offered to the ſtage a comedy borrowed from a Spaniſh plot, which was refuſed by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more intereſt, made ſome ſlight alterations, and brought it upon the ſtage under the title of "Woman's a Riddle," but allowed the unhappy author no part of the profit.

Not

Not diſcouraged however at his repulſe, he wrote two years afterwards "Love in a Veil," another comedy, borrowed likewiſe from the Spaniſh, but with little better ſucceſs than before; for though it was acted, yet it appeared ſo late in the year, that the author obtained no other advantage from it than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Wilks, by whom he was pitied, careſſed, and relieved, The firſt promoted his intereſt with the utmoſt zeal, and aſſerted, that "the inhumanity of his mother had given him a right to find every good man his father." That he enjoyed Sir Richard's confidence, may be known by the following ſtory:

Sir Richard took him one morning in a chariot to Hyde Park Corner, where they ſtopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him, that he intended to publiſh a pamphlet, and deſired him to ſit down and write for him. Savage wrote what the other dictated, till the dinner was put upon the table. Savage was ſurpriſed at the meanneſs of the entertainment, and after ſome heſitation ventured to aſk for wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finiſhed their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon. Sir Richard then told him that the pamphlet muſt be ſold, as he had no money, before the reckoning could be diſcharged; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to ſale for two guineas, which with ſome difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and compoſed the pamphlet for the purpoſe of paying his bill.

In the midſt of his intentions of ſerving Savage he was officiouſly informed that Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was ſo exaſperated that he withdrew the allowance which he had contrived to pay him,

him, and never afterwards admitted him to his houſe.

He was now again abandoned to his fortune, without any other friend than Mr. Wilks; a man who, whatever were his abilities as an actor, deſerves at leaſt to be remembered for his virtues. He took this unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only aſſiſted him in any caſual diſtreſſes, but continued an equal and ſteady kindneſs to the time of his death.

It is ſaid, that by his interpoſition Savage once obtained from his mother fifty pounds, and a promiſe of one hundred and fifty more, which afterwards ſhe refuſed to pay. Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendſhip of Mr. Wilks, he was conſequently an aſſiduous frequenter of the theatres. A conſtant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and, among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was ſo much pleaſed with his converſation, and touched with his misfortunes, that ſhe allowed him a ſettled penſion of fifty pounds a year, which was during her life regularly paid. At her death he endeavoured to ſhew his gratitude by wearing mourning as for a mother, and in his "Wanderer" he has taken an opportunity of celebrating her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her.

He had ſometimes, by the kindneſs of Mr. Wilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which occaſion he often received uncommon marks of regard and compaſſion. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole intereſt of his mother was employed to fruſtrate his applications, and that ſhe never left any expedient untried by which he might be cut off from the poſſibility of ſupporting life.

However, by the kindneſs of his friends, he was enabled to proceed, and he now endeavoured once more at dramatick poetry.---Having been unſucceſsful in comedy, he reſolved to try whether he ſhould not be more

more fortunate in exhibiting a tragedy. The ſtory which he choſe for the ſubject was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a ſtory well adapted to the ſtage. Out of this ſtory he formed a tragedy, which, if the circumſtances in which he wrote it be conſidered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of ſtrength of genius, and evenneſs of mind, of a ſerenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be ſuppreſſed.

During a conſiderable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniencies for ſtudy than the fields or the ſtreet allowed him; there he uſed to walk and form his ſpeeches, and afterwards ſtep into a ſhop, beg for a few moments the uſe of the pen and ink, and write down what he had compoſed, upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

Under theſe diſcouragements the tragedy was finiſhed, and he ſent it to Mr. Hill, with a ſhort copy of verſes, in which he deſired his correction. After ſeveral alterations, many of which Savage rejected, the play made its appearance in the ſummer, when the chief actors had retired. Savage himſelf was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury, by which he gained no great reputation, for neither his voice, look, nor geſture, were ſuch as were expected on the ſtage; and he was ſo much aſhamed of being reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the liſt, when a copy of his tragedy was to be ſhewn to his friends.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits aroſe to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large ſum, having been never maſter of ſo much before.

Soon however his neceſſities returned, when Mr. Hill encouraged a ſubſcription to a miſcellany of poems, by publiſhing his ſtory in the periodical paper of

of the "Plain Dealer" written by Hill and Bond, with ſome affecting lines. The ſubſcriptions of thoſe whom theſe papers ſhould influence to patronize merit in diſtreſs, were directed to be left at Button's Coffee-houſe; and Mr. Savage, going thither a few days afterwards, found to his ſurprize ſeventy guineas. To this Miſcellany he wrote a preface, in which he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon ſtrain of humour, and with a gaiety of imagination which the ſucceſs of his ſubſcription probably produced.

Soon afterwards the death of the king furniſhed a general ſubject for a poetical conteſt, in which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors. He was now advancing in reputation, and, though frequently involved in very diſtreſsful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind, when both his fame and his life were endangered by a moſt unfortunate event.

On the 20th of November 1727, Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, to London; and accidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaintances, whoſe names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffee-houſe and ſat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the firſt of the company that deſired to ſeparate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the ſame houſe, but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the ſtreets, and divert themſelves with ſuch amuſements as might offer themſelves till morning.

In their walk they happened unluckily to diſcover a light in Robinſon's coffee-houſe near Charing-croſs, and therefore went in. Merchant with ſome rudeneſs demanded a room, and was told there was a good fire

in

in the next parlour which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not ſatisfied with this anſwer, ruſhed into the room, and was followed by his companions. A quarrel enſued, ſwords were drawn, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage forced his way with Merchant out of the houſe, but they were both taken in a back court.

Being ſecured and guarded that night, they were in the morning carried before three juſtices, who committed them to the Gatehouſe, from whence upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened the ſame day, they were removed in the night to Newgate. There they remained until the aweful period of their trial came, which took up eight hours, when the jury determined that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder, and Mr. Merchant, who had no ſword, only of manſlaughter.

Mr. Juſtice Page (who was then upon the bench) treated Savage with an inſolence and ſeverity which was uſual with him, and when he had ſummed up the evidence endeavoured to exaſperate the jury, as Mr. Savage uſed to relate it, with this eloquent harangue:

"Gentlemen of the jury, you are to conſider that Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much greater man than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he wears very fine clothes, much finer clothes than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he has abundance of money in his pocket, much more money than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; but, gentlemen of the jury, is it not a very hard caſe, gentlemen of the jury, that Mr. Savage ſhould therefore kill you or me, gentlemen of the jury?"

Savage attempted to remonſtrate, and the judge ordered him to be taken from the bar by force.

Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to priſon, where they were cloſely confined, and loaded with

with irons of fifty pounds weight; four days after, they were ſent back to the court and received ſentence.

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life, but from the mercy of the crown, which was very earneſtly ſolicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the ſtory may obtain belief, was obſtructed only by his mother. When the queen was ſollicited for his pardon, and informed of the ſevere treatment which he had ſuffered from his judge, ſhe anſwered, "that however unjuſtifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, ſhe could not think that man a proper object of the king's mercy who had been capable of entering his mother's houſe with an intent to murder her."

Horrid as it may ſeem, this atrocious calumny had been circulated by his mother without the ſmalleſt foundation in truth, in order to blaſt his hopes of obtaining the leaſt mitigation of his puniſhment. Thus had he periſhed for an act committed in the hour of riot, and ſupported by the evidence of perſons not much entitled to credit, had not juſtice and compaſſion procured him an advocate in the Counteſs of Hertford, who, hearing of his merit and his calamities, engaged in his ſupport, and, demanding an audience of the queen, laid before her the whole ſeries of his mother's cruelty, expoſed the improbability of an accuſation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and ſoon convinced her how little his former conduct could deſerve to be mentioned as a reaſon for extraordinary ſeverity. The interpoſition of this lady was ſo ſucceſsful, that he was ſoon after admitted to bail, and on the 9th of March 1728 pleaded the king's pardon.

During the time of his impriſonment, his trial, and the time which he lay under ſentence of death, he behaved with great firmneſs and equality of mind, and con-

confirmed by his fortitude the eſteem of thoſe who before admired him for his abilities. He was enabled by frequent preſents, not only to ſupport himſelf in priſon, but to aſſiſt his aſſociate in misfortune, Mr. Gregory, who was alſo releaſed, and became afterwards collector of Antigua.

Some time after he had obtained his liberty, he met in the ſtreet a woman who had ſworn with much malignity againſt him on his trial. She informed him, that ſhe was in diſtreſs, and, with a degree of confidence not eaſily attainable, deſired him to relieve her. He, inſtead of inſulting her miſery, and taking pleaſure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury, and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himſelf. This is an action which muſt be allowed of uncommon generoſity, an act of complicated virtue. Compaſſion was indeed the diſtinguiſhing quality of Savage.

He was now at liberty, but was, as before, without any other ſupport than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him; ſources by which he was ſometimes very liberally ſupplied, and which at other times were ſuddenly ſtopped.---In order to gain ſome ſettled income, he determined, after finding ſubmiſſion and entreaties fruitleſs, to attempt to extort it from his mother by rougher methods. He threatened to harraſs her with lampoons, and to publiſh a copious narrative of her conduct, unleſs ſhe conſented to purchaſe an exemption from infamy by allowing him a penſion.

This expedient proved ſucceſsful. Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promiſe to lay aſide his deſign of expoſing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a penſion of two hundred pounds a year. This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's

vage's life; and for ſome time he had no reaſon to complain of fortune; his appearance was ſplendid, his expences large, and his acquaintance large.

This interval of proſperity furniſhed him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its higheſt gradations to its loweſt.---That he made exact obſervations on human life he has left a proof, which would do honour to the greateſt names, in a ſmall pamphlet called "The Author to be Let."

About this time, notwithſtanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he publiſhed a panegyric on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with the trifling ſum, at leaſt to him at that period, of twenty guineas. In this gay part of his life (1729), while he was ſurrounded by affluence and pleaſure, he publiſhed "The Wanderer," a moral poem. This performance was always conſidered by himſelf as his maſter-piece; and when he aſked his friend Mr. Pope his opinion of it, the latter told him, that he read it once over, and was not diſpleaſed with it, that it gave him more pleaſure at the ſecond peruſal, and delighted him ſtill more at the third. The copy was ſold for ſo ſmall a ſum as ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two laſt ſheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his abſence intruſted the correction to a friend who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

That he ſold ſo valuable a performance for ſo ſmall a price was not to be imputed to neceſſity, but to that intemperate deſire of pleaſure and habitual ſlavery to his paſſions, which involved him in many perplexities; he happened at that time to be engaged in the purſuit of ſome trifling gratification, and, being without money for the preſent occaſion, ſold his poem to the firſt bidder, and perhaps for the firſt price that

was propoſed, and probably would have been content with leſs, if leſs had been offered.

He was now diſcarded by Lord Tyrconnel, in conſequence of frequently entertaining in his Lordſhip's houſe large parties of his riotous and licentious companions, who often indulged themſelves in the utmoſt extravagance of merriment, and committed all the outrages of drunkenneſs.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought againſt him: Having giving him a collection of valuable books, ſtamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to ſee them in a ſhort time expoſed to ſale upon ſtalls, it being uſual with Mr. Savage, when he wanted a ſmall ſum, to take his books to the pawnbroker. Savage recriminated in his turn, and it is thought that there were accumulated provocations on both ſides.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrconnel, he wrote "The Triumph of Health and Mirth," on the recovery of Lord Tyrconnel from a languiſhing illneſs. This performance is remarkable not only for the gaiety of the ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreeable fiction upon which it is formed.

He was now baniſhed from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without proſpect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was diſtinguiſhed, he had made no proviſion againſt a misfortune like this. The difficulties to which Mr. Savage was therefore expoſed were ſoon conſiderable, and he found no friend very willing to ſtep forward to relieve them. He thought himſelf fully at liberty to expoſe the cruelty of his mother, being excluded from that ſubſiſtence which he thought not ſo much a favour as a debt, and about this time publiſhed "The Baſtard," a poem remarkable for the vivacious ſallies of thought

in

in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of baſe birth; and the pathetic ſentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he ſuffered by the crime of his parents. It was very favourably received, and editions of it were multiplied with unuſual rapidity. It was dedicated, with "due reverence," to his mother, and was ſold for a trivial ſum to a bookſeller.

The profits which he gained from the "Baſtard" could not therefore alleviate the neceſſities which he experienced, which induced him to apply to the queen, who having once given him life might enable him to ſupport it. With this idea he publiſhed a ſhort poem on her birth day, to which he gave the odd title of "Volunteer Laureat." Her majeſty was highly pleaſed with the verſes, ſent him a bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a meſſage by the Lord North and Guilford, that he had permiſſion to write annually on the ſame ſubject, and that he ſhould yearly receive the like preſent, till ſomething better ſhould be done for him. After this he was permitted to preſent one of his annual poems to her majeſty, had the honour of kiſſing her hand, and met with the moſt gracious reception. The ſubſequent publication of his "Volunteer Laureat," therefore, procured him a reward of a regular remittance of the above ſum, but he received no further extenſion of her majeſty's bounty.

When the Princeſs Anne was married, he wrote a poem upon her departure, only, as he declared, "becauſe it was expected from him." He never mentioned any advantage gained by this production.

When the diſpute between the Biſhop of London and the Chancellor was the chief topick of political converſation, Mr. Savage took a decided part againſt the firſt, and publiſhed a new poem entitled "The Progreſs of a Divine," in which he conducts a profligate prieſt by all the gradations of wickedneſs from

a poor curacy in the country, to the higheſt preferments in the church; and inſinuates that this prieſt, thus accompliſhed, found at laſt a patron in the Biſhop of London. For this work the Court of King's Bench was moved againſt him, and he was obliged to return an anſwer to a charge of obſcenity, from which he cleared himſelf to the entire ſatisfaction of the court, in which Sir Philip Yorke preſided, who diſmiſſed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's writings.

He was ſtill in his uſual exigencies, having no certain ſupport but the penſion allowed him by the queen, which, though it might have kept an exact œconomiſt from want, was very far from being ſufficient for Mr. Savage.

His conduct with regard to his penſion was very particular. No ſooner had he changed the bill, than he vaniſhed from the ſight of all his acquaintance, and lay for ſome time out of the reach of all the enquiries that friendſhip or curioſity could make after him; at length he appeared again, pennyleſs as before, but never informed even thoſe whom he ſeemed to regard moſt where he had been, nor was his retreat ever diſcovered.

After experiencing a diſappointment in his hopes of receiving ſome place which was promiſed him by Sir Robert Walpole, he was determined to addreſs a poem to the Prince, who at that time was extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of ſeveral writers. After retiring for ſome time to Richmond, he produced a poem "On Public Spirit with regard to Public Works," and inſcribed it to the Prince. Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to preſent it to him, had no other method of attracting his obſervation than the publication of frequent advertiſements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occaſions. Here

he

he again ſuffered another diſappointment, which was increaſed by finding the publick did not much countenance the work, for only ſeventy-two copies were ſold. It was not conſidered in general as one of his happy efforts.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which, notwithſtanding his fifty pounds a year were punctually paid, was ſuch as few people could have ſupported with equal patience. No ſooner had he received his penſion, than he withdrew to his darling privacy as uſual, from which he returned in a ſhort time to his former diſtreſs, and for ſome part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintance, from which the meanneſs of his dreſs often excluded him.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and paſſed the night ſometimes in mean houſes, which are ſet open at night to any caſual wanderers, ſometimes in cellars among the riot and filth of the meanneſt and moſt profligate of the rabble; and ſometimes, when he had not money to ſupport even the expences of thoſe receptacles, walked about the ſtreets till he was weary, and lay down in the ſummer upon a bulk, or in the winter, with his aſſociates in poverty, among the aſhes of a glaſs-houſe.

Theſe diſtreſſes, however afflictive, never dejected him, or made him ſubmit to be treated by any perſon, however exalted in ſituation, otherwiſe than as an equal. Once, when he was without a lodging, meat, or cloaths, one of his friends left a meſſage, that he deſired to ſee him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to aſſiſt him; but he was very much diſguſted that he ſhould preſume to preſcribe the hour of his attendance, and, it is thought, refuſed to viſit him and rejected his kindneſs.

In the midſt of poverty, and the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him, he had recourſe to the

uſual practice of writers, and publiſhed propoſals for printing his works by ſubſcription, which, although not generally ſucceſsful, were encouraged by ſome of the nobility. He related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that upon receiving his propoſals, he ſent him ten guineas.

But the money which his ſubſcriptions afforded him was not leſs volatile than that which he received from his other ſchemes; whenever a ſubſcription was paid him he went to a tavern; and as money ſo collected is neceſſarily received in ſmall ſums, he never was able to ſend his poems to the preſs, but for many years continued his ſolicitation, and ſquandered whatever he obtained. Finding, after repeated trials, the impoſſibility of his being able to print the whole volume together, he, at laſt, determined to divide his works into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the firſt might ſupply the expences of the next.

Thus he ſpent his time in mean expedients, and tormenting ſuſpenſe, living for the greateſt part in the fear of proſecutions from his creditors, and conſequently ſkulking in obſcure parts of the town.

His life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet embittered in 1738 with new calamities. He had long entertained expectations of preferment from the queen, but her death at once deſtroyed them. This was followed by the loſs of his penſion, although he wrote on the occaſion of the queen's deceaſe one of the fineſt poetical funeral panegyrics that the death of princes has produced.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore not only with decency, but with chearfulneſs; nor was his gaiety clouded even by his laſt diſappointments, though he was in a ſhort time reduced to the loweſt degree of diſtreſs, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another inſtance of the inſurmountable obſtinacy of his ſpirit: his cloaths were

were worn out, and he received notice, that at a coffee-houſe ſome cloaths and linen were left for him: the perſon who ſent them did not, it is thought, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, and neglected ſome trifling ceremonies, which Mr. Savage ſo much reſented, that he refuſed the preſent, and declined to enter the houſe till the cloaths that had been deſigned for him were taken away.

His diſtreſs was now publickly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert ſome meaſures for his relief. The ſcheme propoſed was, that he ſhould retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raiſed by a ſubſcription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aſpiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from thoſe of his friends; for they propoſed that he ſhould continue an exile from London for ever, and ſpend all the remaining part of his life at Swanſea; but he deſigned only to take the opportunity of retreating for a ſhort time, that he might prepare for the ſtage a ſecond tragedy upon the ſtory of Sir Thomas Overbury, and his other works for the preſs, and then return to London, to exhibit his play, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

While the ſcheme of his friends was ripening, they directed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be ſecure from his creditors, and ſent him every Monday a guinea, which he commonly ſpent before the next morning, and truſted, after his uſual manner, the remaining part of the week to the bounty of fortune.

After waiting for ſome time in this ſituation, a ſubſcription was at length raiſed, which did not amount to fifty pounds a year. Mr. Savage however was ſatisfied, and, willing to retire, was convinced that the al-

lowance, though ſcanty, would be more than ſufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid œconomiſt, and to live according to the exacteſt rules of frugality.

Full of theſe ſalutary reſolutions, he left London in July 1739.---He was furniſhed with fifteen guineas, and informed that they would be ſufficient, not only for the expence of his journey, but for his ſupport in Wales for ſome time. He promiſed a ſtrict adherence to his maxims of parſimony, and went away in the ſtage coach.

In fourteen days after his departure arrived a letter in which he ſent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money; and that therefore he could not proceed without a remittance. They then ſent him what was remaining in their hands of the firſt collection, with which he was enabled to reach Briſtol, from whence he was to go to Swanſea by water.

After ſome ſtay at Briſtol he retired to Swanſea, where he lived about a year, continually complaining of the conduct of his friends in London, and at laſt irritated many of them ſo much that they withdrew their contributions, which reduced his ſalary to very little more than twenty pounds a year, which he ſaid was ſcarcely equal to the neceſſaries of life. This diminution of his promiſed allowance was certainly a hardſhip, and his reſentment, in conſequence, was ſuch that he broke off all correſpondence with moſt of his contributors.

Having finiſhed his tragedy, he was determined to return to London, and with that intention he went to Briſtol, where he was invited to ſtay by thoſe people with whom he had made himſelf acquainted before. He was not only careſſed and kindly treated by them, but they alſo made a collection for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately

mediately departed for London, but remaining there ſo long that his friends began to be tired of him, he could not afterwards procure a ſum ſufficient to defray the expences of his journey.

While he was ſpending the day in contriving a ſcheme for the morrow, diſtreſs ſtole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His friends now almoſt entirely deſerted him, and, to complete his miſery, he was purſued by the bailiffs for ſmall debts which he had contracted. He was therefore compelled to elude their ſearch. His cuſtom was to lie in bed the greateſt part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmoſt privacy, and, after having paid a viſit, return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obſcure inn.

He now ſuffered the utmoſt extremities of poverty, and often faſted ſo long that he was ſeized with faintneſs, and had loſt his appetite, not being able to bear the ſmell of meat, till the action of his ſtomach was reſtored by a cordial. In this diſtreſs he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himſelf a decent coat, and determined to ſet out for that place, but unhappily ſpent his money at a favourite tavern. Thus was he again confined to Briſtol, where he was every day hunted by bailiffs, until on the night of the tenth of January 1742-3, he was, at his return to his lodgings, arreſted for a debt of about eight pounds, and conducted to the houſe of a ſheriff's officer, with three pence halfpenny in his pocket.

He continued five days at this place, in hopes that he ſhould be able to procure bail, and avoid the neceſſity of going to priſon.---But his friends found that to give bail and pay the debt was the ſame, they all refuſed to aſſiſt him, and he was at length removed to Newgate. It ought however here to be ſtated, that he was enabled to ſupport the expence of the ſpunging

houſe by the generoſity of Mr. Naſh at Bath, who ſent him five guineas.

It is obſervable, that in theſe various ſcenes of miſery he was always diſengaged and cheerful. But in this confinement he ſuffered fewer hardſhips than he had been accuſtomed to undergo in the greateſt part of his life, owing to the humanity and kind treatment of Mr. Dagg, the keeper of the priſon. Mr. Savage very frequently received viſits, and ſometimes preſents, from his acquaintance; but although ſuch conduct endeared to him thoſe people, ſtill he entertained no advantageous ideas of the inhabitants of Briſtol, and thought he could not more properly employ himſelf in priſon, than in writing a poem called "London and Briſtol delineated." This was thought by many an act of ingratitude as well as imprudence, conſidering the former treatment he had experienced, and the ſituation he was then in at that place. When the work was finiſhed he wrote to his friend (the only one among his ſubſcribers with whom he correſponded, and who yet continued to remit him the 20l. a year), and informed him of his intention of publiſhing it. The gentleman, ſurpriſed at his reſolution, endeavoured to diſſuade him from it; but Savage treated his advice with the utmoſt contempt. Being now fully determined to haſten the publication, at laſt the hour came when all his ſchemes were ſuddenly deſtroyed.

Some days after he had received a letter from his friend Mr. Pope containing a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, which he anſwered by a proteſtation of his innocence, he was ſeized with a pain in his back and ſide, which, as it was not violent, was not ſuſpected to be dangerous; but, growing daily more languid and dejected, on the twenty-fifth of July he confined himſelf to his room, and a fever ſeized his ſpirits. The ſymptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition

condition did not enable him to procure any aſſiſtance. The laſt time that the keeper ſaw him was on July the 31ſt, 1743, when Savage, ſeeing him at his bedſide, ſaid, with an uncommon earneſtneſs, " I have ſomething to ſay to you, Sir;" but, after a pauſe, moved his hand in a melancholy manner, and, finding himſelf unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, ſaid, " 'Tis gone!" The keeper ſoon after left him, and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expence of the keeper, after ſix months confinement.

" He was (ſays Dr. Johnſon, who was intimate with him) of a middle ſtature, of a thin habit of body, a long viſage, coarſe features, and melancholy aſpect; of a grave and manly deportment, a ſolemn dignity of mien, but which, upon a nearer acquaintanee, ſoftened into an engaging eaſineſs of manners. His walk was ſlow, and his voice tremulous and mournful—He was eaſily excited to ſmiles, but very ſeldom provoked to laughter.

" His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active. His judgment was accurate, his apprehenſion quick, and his memory ſo tenacious, that he was frequently obſerved to know what he had learned from others in a ſhort time, better than thoſe by whom he was informed; and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumſtances, which few would have regarded at the preſent time, but which the quickneſs of his apprehenſion impreſſed upon him. He had the peculiar felicity that his attention never deſerted him; he was preſent to every object, and regardful of the moſt trifling occurrences. He had the art of eſcaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himſelf to every new ſcene."

" His method of life particularly qualified him for converſation, of which he knew how to practiſe all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but

at once modeſt and eaſy, open and reſpectful; his language was vivacious and elegant, and equally happy upon grave or humorous ſubjects."

"With regard to his œconomy nothing can be added to the relation of his life. He appeared to think himſelf born to be ſupported by others, and diſpenſed from all neceſſity of providing for himſelf."

"His temper was, in conſequence of the dominion of his paſſions, uncertain and capricious; he was eaſily engaged, and eaſily diſguſted; but he is accuſed of retaining his hatred more tenaciouſly than his benevolence.

"He was compaſſionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked (and very ſmall offences were ſufficient to provoke him) he would proſecute his revenge with the utmoſt acrimony till his paſſion had ſubſided. His friendſhip was therefore of little value."

"He could not eaſily leave off when he had once begun to mention himſelf or his works; nor ever read his verſes without ſtealing his eyes from the page, to diſcover, in the faces of his audience, how they were affected with any favourite paſſage."

"As an author therefore, and he now ceaſes to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had reſolved to ſuppreſs be excepted, he has very little to fear from the ſtricteſt moral or religious cenſure. And though he may not be altogether ſecure againſt the objections of the critic, it muſt however be acknowledged that his works are the productions of a genius truly poetical, and, what many writers who have been more laviſhly applauded cannot boaſt, that they have an original air, which has no reſemblance of any foregoing writer; that the verſification and ſentiments have a caſt peculiar to themſelves, which no man can imitate with ſucceſs, becauſe what

was

was nature in Savage, would in another be affectation. It must be confessed that his descriptions are striking, his images animated, his fictions justly imagined, and his allegories artfully pursued; that his diction is elevated, though sometimes forced, and his numbers sonorous and majestic, though frequently sluggish and encumbered. Of his style the general fault is harshness, and its general excellence is dignity; of his sentiments the prevailing beauty is sublimity, and uniformity the prevailing effect."

SOMERVILE.

DR. JOHNSON's account of this author is short, and confessedly unsatisfactorily.

He was a gentleman whose estate was in Warwickshire; his house is called Edston, a seat inherited from a long line of ancestors, for he was said to be of the first family in his county. He tells of himself, that he was born near the Avon's banks. He was bred at Winchester-school, but whether of any University is not stated.

Of the close of his life his friend Shenstone gives the following sad account in one of his Letters:

"—— Our old friend Somervile is dead! I did not imagine I could have been so sorry as I find myself on this occasion. I can now excuse his foibles, impute them to age and to distress of circumstances: the last of these considerations wrings my very soul to think on. For a man of high spirit, conscious of having (at least in one production) generally pleased the world, to be plagued and threatened by wretches that are low in every sense; to be forced to

to drink himſelf into pains of the body, in order to get rid of the pains of the mind, is a miſery." He died July 14th, 1743.

Dr. Johnſon ſays but little of his occaſional poems. We ſhall give the reader only the principal part of his remarks on the "Chaſe," this author's greateſt work.

"—— His great work is his "Chaſe," which he undertook in his maturer age, when his ear was improved to the approbation of blank verſe, of which however his two firſt lines give a bad ſpecimen. To this poem praiſe cannot totally be denied. He is allowed by ſportſmen to write with great intelligence of his ſubject, which is the firſt requiſite to excellence; and though it is impoſſible to intereſt the common readers of verſe in the dangers or pleaſures of the chaſe, he has done all that tranſition and variety could eaſily effect; and has with great propriety enlarged his plan by the modes of hunting uſed in other countries."

THOMSON.

JAMES THOMSON the ſon of a miniſter well eſteemed for his piety and diligence, was born September 7, 1700, at Ednam in the ſhire of Roxburgh, of which his father was paſtor. His mother, whoſe name was Hume, inherited as co-heireſs a portion of a ſmall eſtate. The revenue of a pariſh in Scotland is ſeldom large; and it was probably in commiſeration of the difficulty with which Mr. Thomſon ſupported his family, having nine children, that Mr. Riccarton a neighbouring miniſter, diſcovering in James uncommon promiſes of future excellence, undertook to ſuperintend his education and provide him books.

He

He was taught the common rudiments of learning at the ſchool of Jedburgh, a place which he delights to recollect in his poem of "Autumn;" but was not conſidered by his maſter as ſuperior to common boys, though in thoſe early days he amuſed his patron and his friends with poetical compoſitions, with which he ſo little pleaſed himſelf, that on every new year's day he threw into the fire all the productions of the foregoing year.

From ſchool he was removed to Edinburgh, where he had not reſided two years when his father died, and left all his children to the care of their mother, who raiſed upon her little eſtate what money a mortgage could afford, and, removing with her family to Edinburgh, lived to ſee her ſon riſing into eminence.

He now determined to viſit London, and cultivate with new diligence his bloſſoms of poetry, which had occaſionally burſted forth to the admiration of many. At his arrival he found his way to Mr. Mallet, and had recommendations to ſeveral perſons of conſequence, which he had tied up carefully in his handkerchief; but as he paſſed along the ſtreets, with the gaping curioſity of a new-comer, his attention was upon every thing rather than his pocket, and his magazine of credentials was ſtolen from him.

His firſt want was of a pair of ſhoes. For the ſupply of all his neceſſities, his whole fund was his "Winter," which for a time could find no purchaſer; till, at laſt, Mr. Millan was perſuaded to buy it at a low price; and this low price he had for ſome time reaſon to regret; but a Mr. Whatley, happening to turn his eye upon it, was ſo delighted that he ran from place to place celebrating its excellencies. Thomſon obtained likewiſe the notice of Aaron Hill. The poem was dedicated to Sir Spencer Compton, who, through the

the exertions of Hill, made the author a preſent of twenty guineas.

Thomſon's credit was now high, and every day brought him more friends.---The next year (1727) he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by three publications; of "Summer," in purſuance of his plan; of "a Poem on the Death of Sir Iſaac Newton," and of "Britannia," a kind of poetical invective againſt the miniſtry. His "Summer" he was deſirous to dedicate to Lord Binning, in whoſe family he had been ſometimes entertained, but his lordſhip adviſed him to addreſs it to Mr. Doddington.

"Spring" was publiſhed next year, with a dedication to the Counteſs of Hertford. "Autumn," the ſeaſon to which the "Spring" and "Summer" are preparatory, ſtill remained unſung, and was delayed till he publiſhed (1730) his works collected.

He produced in 1727 the tragedy of "Sophoniſba," which raiſed conſiderable expectation, but it had upon the ſtage no unuſual degree of ſucceſs. He was, not long afterwards, ſent to travel with Mr. Charles Talbot, the eldeſt ſon of the Chancellor. In his travels on the continent he found, or fancied, ſo many evils ariſing from the tyranny of other governments, that he reſolved to write a very long poem, in five parts, upon "Liberty." While he was buſy on the firſt book, Mr. Talbot died; and Thomſon, who had been rewarded for his attendance by the place of Secretary of the Briefs, pays in the initial lines a decent tribute to his memory.

Two years were ſpent upon this poem, and the author congratulated himſelf upon it as his nobleſt work; but none of his performances were ſo little regarded.

He however now lived in eaſe and plenty, and ſeems for a while to have ſuſpended his poetry; but he was ſoon called back to labour by the death of the chancellor,

cellor, for his place then became filled by another perſon. He now relapſed to his former indigence; but the Prince of Wales, by the influence of Littleton, procured him a penſion of one hundred pounds a year.

Being now obliged to write, he produced (1738) the tragedy of "Agamemnon." It ſtruggled with ſuch difficulty through the firſt night, that Thomſon, coming late to his friends with whom he was to ſup, excuſed his delay by telling them how the ſweat of his diſtreſs had ſo diſordered his wig, that he could not come till he had been refitted by a barber. He ſo intereſted himſelf in his new drama, that, it is ſaid, as he ſat in the upper gallery he accompanied the players by audible recitation, till a friendly hint frighted him to ſilence. About this time the act was paſſed for licenſing plays, of which the firſt operation was the prohibition of Guſtavus Vaſa, a tragedy of Mr. Brooke, and the next was the refuſal of "Edward and Eleonora," offered by Thomſon. He was ſoon after employed, in conjunction with Mr. Mallet, to write the maſque of "Alfred," which was acted before the prince at Cliefden-houſe.

His next work (1745) was "Tancred and Sigiſmunda," the moſt ſucceſsful of all his tragedies. His friend Mr. Lyttleton was now in power, and conferred upon him the office of Surveyor-general of the Leeward Iſlands; from which, when his deputy was paid, he received about three hundred pounds a year.

The laſt piece that he lived to publiſh was the "Caſtle of Indolence," which was many years under his hand, but was at laſt finiſhed with great accuracy. The firſt canto opens a ſcene of lazy luxury, that fills the imagination.

He was now at eaſe, but was not long to enjoy it; for, by taking cold on the water between London and Kew, he caught a diſorder, which, with ſome careleſs exaſpe-

exaſperation, ended in a fever that put an end to his life, Auguſt 27th, 1748. He was buried in the church of Richmond without an inſcription; but a monument has been erected to his memory in Weſtminſter Abbey.

" Thomſon was of ſtature above the middle ſize, *and more fat than bard beſeems*, of a dull countenance, and a groſs uninviting appearance; ſilent in mingled company, but chearful among ſelect friends, and by his friends very tenderly and warmly beloved.

" He left behind him the tragedy of " Coriolanus," which was, by the zeal of his patron Sir George Lyttleton, brought upon the ſtage for the benefit of his family, and recommended by a prologue, which Quin, who had long lived with Thomſon in ſome intimacy, ſpoke in ſuch a manner as ſhewed him *to be*, on that occaſion, *no actor*. The commencement of this benevolence is very honourable to Quin, who is reported to have delivered Thomſon, then known to him only for his genius, from an arreſt, by a very conſiderable preſent; and its continuance is honourable to both; for friendſhip is not always the ſequel of obligation. By this tragedy a conſiderable ſum was raiſed, of which part diſcharged his debts, and the reſt was remitted to his ſiſters."

" —— The benevolence of Thomſon was fervid, but not active; he would give, on all occaſions, what aſſiſtance his purſe could ſupply; but the offices of intervention or ſolicitation he could not conquer his ſluggiſhneſs ſufficiently to perform."

" —— Among his peculiarities was a very unſkilful and inarticulate manner of pronouncing any lofty or ſolemn compoſition. He was once reading to Doddington, who, being himſelf a reader eminently elegant, was ſo much provoked by his odd utterance, that he ſnatched the paper from his hand, and told him, that he did not underſtand his own verſes."

" —— As

" —— As a writer he is entitled to one praiſe of the higheſt kind; his mode of thinking and of expreſſing his thoughts is original. His blank verſe is no more the blank verſe of Milton, or of any other poet, than the rhymes of Prior are the rhymes of Cowley. His numbers, his pauſes, his diction, are of his own growth, without tranſcription, without imitation. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on nature and on life, with the eye which nature beſtows only on a poet; the eye that diſtinguiſhes, in every thing preſented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and with a mind that at once comprehends the vaſt, and attends to the minute."

" —— The great defect of the " Seaſons" is want of method; but for this I know not that there was any remedy."

" —— His diction is in the higheſt degree florid and luxuriant, ſuch as may be ſaid to be to his images and thoughts *both their luſtre and their ſhade*; ſuch as inveſt them with ſplendour, through which perhaps they are not eaſily diſcerned. It is too exuberant, and ſometimes may be charged with filling the ear more than the mind."

" —— " Liberty," when it appeared, I tried to read, and ſoon deſiſted. I have never tried again, and therefore will not hazard either praiſe or cenſure."

HAMMOND.

HE was the ſecond ſon of Anthony Hammond, a man of note among the wits, poets, and parliamentary orators in the beginning of this century, who was

was allied to Sir Robert Walpole by marrying his ſiſter. He was born about 1710, and educated at Weſtminſter-ſchool, but it does not appear that he was of any univerſity. He was equerry to the Prince of Wales, and ſeems to have come very early into publick notice. He fell in love with a lady, whoſe name was Daſhwood, which for a time, 'tis ſaid, diſordered his underſtanding.

He divided his time between pleaſure and books, in his retirement forgetting the town, and in his gaiety loſing the ſtudent. Of his literary hours all the effects are exhibited in the collection, of which the Elegies were written very early, and the Prologues not long before his death.

In 1741 he was choſen into parliament for Truro in Cornwall, and died next year in June at Stowe, the famous ſeat of Lord Cobham. His miſtreſs long outlived him, and in 1779 died unmarried. The character which her lover bequeathed her was, indeed, not likely to attract courtſhip.

"The Elegies of Hammond," ſays Dr. Johnſon, "have neither paſſion, nature, nor manners. Where there is fiction, there is no paſſion; he that deſcribes himſelf as a ſhepherd, and his Neæra or Delia as a ſhepherdeſs, and talks of goats and lambs, feels no paſſion. He that courts his miſtreſs with Roman imagery deſerves to loſe her, for ſhe may with good reaſon ſuſpect his ſincerity. Hammond has few ſentiments drawn from nature, and few images from modern life. He produces nothing but frigid pedantry. It would be hard to find in all his productions three ſtanzas that deſerve to be remembered."

COLLINS.

COLLINS.

WILLIAM COLLINS was born at Chicheſter the twenty-fifth of December, about 1720. His father was a hatter of good reputation. He was in 1733 admitted ſcholar of Wincheſter college, where he was educated by Dr. Burton.

He firſt courted the notice of the publick by ſome verſes "To a Lady weeping," publiſhed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. In 1740 he ſtood firſt in the liſt of the ſcholars to be received in ſucceſſion at New College; but unhappily there was no vacancy. This was the original misfortune of his life. He became a Commoner of Queen's College, probably with a ſcanty maintenance; but was in about half a year elected a *demy* of Magdalen College, where he continued till he had taken a Bachelor's degree, and then ſuddenly left the univerſity.

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pocket. He deſigned many works, but his great fault was irreſolution, or the frequent calls of immediate neceſſity broke his ſchemes, and ſuffered him to purſue no ſettled purpoſe. He publiſhed propoſals for a Hiſtory of the Revival of Learning; but probably not a page of it was ever written. He planned ſeveral tragedies, but he only planned them.

Dr. Johnſon gives us an account of his being one day admitted to Collins, when he was immured by a bailiff that was prowling in the ſtreet. On this occaſion recourſe was had to the bookſellers, who on the credit of a tranſlation of "Ariſtotle's Poeticks," which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced

vanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. Soon after, his uncle Mr. Martin, a lieutenant-colonel, left him about 2000 l. a sum which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust. The above money was then repaid, and the translation neglected.

The latter part of his life cannot be remembered but with pity and sadness. He languished some years under that depression of mind which enchains the faculties without destroying them, and leaves reason the knowledge of right without the power of pursuing it. Those clouds which he perceived gathering on his intellects he endeavoured to disperse by travel, and passed into France; but found himself constrained to yield to his malady, and returned. He was for some time confined in a house of lunaticks, and afterwards retired to the care of his sister in Chichester, where death in 1756 came to his relief.

It is remarkable, that Johnson in his criticism on this writer never mentions the celebrated "Ode on the Passions." He concludes what he says thus:

——"His diction was often harsh, unskilfully laboured, and injudiciously selected. He affected the obsolete when it was not worthy of revival; and he puts his words out of the common order, seeming to think, with some later candidates for fame, that not to write prose is certainly to write poetry. His lines commonly are of slow motion, clogged and impeded with clusters of consonants. As men are often esteemed who cannot be loved, so the poetry of Collins may sometimes extort praise when it gives little pleasure*."

YOUNG.

* Mr. Hayley differed greatly in opinion with Dr. Johnson as to Collins's poetical talents, as will be seen in the following excellent epitaph, on a monument erected to his memory at Chichester in 1795.

YE who the merits of the dead revere,
Who hold misfortune sacred, *genius* dear,

Regard

YOUNG.

THE life of this author is written by Herbert Croft at the requeſt of Johnſon, and inſerted in the form of a letter, from which we ſhall of courſe take our materials.

Edward Young was born at Upham near Wincheſter in June 1681. He was the ſon of Edward Young, at that time Fellow of Wincheſter College and Rector of Upham. In September 1682 the poet's father was collated to the Prebend of Gillingham Minor, in the Church of Sarum, by Biſhop Ward. On the childiſhneſs of Ward, his duties were neceſſarily performed by others. In conſequence of the prebendary's merit and reputation, he was appointed Chaplain to King William and Queen Mary, and preferred to the Deanry of Sarum. Jacob, who wrote in 1720, ſays he was chaplain and clerk of the cloſet to the late queen, who honoured him by ſtanding godmother to the poet.

Regard this tomb, where COLLINS' hapleſs name
Solicits kindneſs with a double claim.
Tho' nature gave him, and though ſcience taught,
The fire of fancy, and the reach of thought,
Severely doom'd to penury's extreme,
He paſs'd in madd'ning pain life's fev'riſh dream;
While *rays of genius* only ſerv'd to ſhow
The thick'ning horror and exalt his woe.
Ye walls, that echoed to his frantic moan,
Guard the due records of this grateful ſtone;
Strangers to him, enamour'd of his lays,
This fond memorial to his talents praiſe:
For this the aſhes of a bard require,
Who touch'd the tend'reſt notes of Pity's lyre;
Who join'd pure faith to *ſtrong poetic pow'rs,*
Who in reviving reaſon's lucid hours
Sought on one book his troubled mind to reſt,
And rightly deem'd the Book of God the beſt.

The

The dean died at Sarum, after a ſhort illneſs (1705), in the ſixty-third year of his age.

He had placed his ſon upon the foundation at Wincheſter College, where he had himſelf been educated. At this ſchool Edward Young remained till the election after his eighteenth birth-day, the period at which thoſe upon the foundation are ſuperannuated. For what reaſon is not known, but our poet did not ſucceed to an Oxford fellowſhip.

On the thirteenth of October 1703 he was entered an independent member of New College, that he might live at little expence in the Warden's lodgings, who was a particular friend of his father, till he ſhould be qualified to ſtand for a fellowſhip at All Souls. In a few months the Warden of New College died. He then removed to Corpus. The Preſident of this college, from a regard alſo for his father, invited him thither, in order to leſſen his academical expences. In 1703 he was nominated to a low fellowſhip at All Souls.

On the twenty-third of April 1714 he took his degree of Bachelor of Civil Laws, and his Doctor's degree on the tenth of June 1719. It is certain, that his college was proud of him, no leſs as a ſcholar than as a poet; for in 1716, when the foundation of Codrington Library was laid, he was appointed to ſpeak the Latin oration. Of this oration there is no appearance in his own edition of his works. It is ſaid, that at the early part of his life he was not the ornament to religion and morality which he afterwards became. It is certain, that he was not aſhamed to be patronized by the infamous Wharton.

His firſt poetical flight was when Queen Anne added in one day ſo many to the number of peers. In order to reconcile the people to one at leaſt of the new lords, he publiſhed in 1712 "An Epiſtle to the Right Honourable George Lord Lanſdowne," in which

which he pours out his panegyrick with the extravagance of a young man who thinks his preſent ſtock of wealth will never be exhauſted, and in which he endeavours to reconcile the publick to the late peace.

When Addiſon publiſhed "Cato" in 1713, Young had the honour of prefixing to it a recommendatory copy of verſes. On the appearance of his "Poem on the Laſt Day," Addiſon did not return Young's compliment. It was inſcribed to the Queen, in a dedication replete with encomiums, but ſhe was ſoon called away from this lower world, to a place where human praiſe or human flattery are of little conſequence. Before her death "The Force of Religion, or Vanquiſhed Love," was ſent into the world, and after it Young publiſhed a poem on the occaſion, and on his Majeſty's acceſſion to the throne.

Thomas Wharton, Eſq. afterwards Marquis of Wharton, when he became ennobled, did not drop the poet, as he had been intimate with his father. In him, during the ſhort time he lived, Young found a patron, and in his diſſolute deſcendant a friend and a companion*. The Marquis died in April 1715. The beginning of the next year the young Marquis ſet out upon his travels, from which he returned in about a twelvemonth. The beginning of 1717 carried him to Ireland, and Young having paid that country a viſit, it is ſuppoſed that he went at this time, when he had an opportunity of going thither with his avowed friend and patron.

The tragedy of "Buſiris" was brought out at Drury Lane in 1719, dedicated to the Duke of Newcaſtle. This was followed in the year 1721 by "The Revenge," which was inſcribed to the Duke of Wharton, who, though abandoned, and highly profligate, ſtill

* See a curious law caſe between the Dr. and the Marquis's executors, ſtated at length in the Modern Reports, vol. ix. page 412. Mr. Leach's edition, 8vo. 1796.

proved himself on many occasions the liberal friend and patron of Young. His Grace discovered in our poet talents for oratory, as well as poetry, and supported him in an attempt to get into Parliament for *Cirencester*. This opinion of his powers was well founded, for when he afterwards took orders he became a very popular preacher, and was much followed for the grace and animation of his delivery.

In 1719 appeared a "Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job."

His "Satires" were the next, and the best information to be had respecting their dates points out the appearance of the first to have been about 1725. The last was certainly finished in the beginning of the year 1726, although the fifth, "On Women," was not published till 1727, and the sixth not till 1728. When he gathered them into one publication he gave them the title of "The Universal Passion," and it is said this poem procured him no less a sum than three thousand pounds. In 1726 "The Instalment" made its appearance, addressed to Sir Robert Walpole.

The reign of the new monarch was ushered in by Young with "Ocean, an Ode." Prefixed to the original publication were an "Ode to the King, Pater Patriæ," and an "Essay on Lyrick Poetry." About this time he entered into orders, and in April 1728, soon after he put on the gown, he was appointed Chaplain to George the Second. The tragedy of "The Brothers," which was already in rehearsal, he immediately withdrew from the stage. Not long after he took orders he published in prose "A true Estimate of Human Life;" and a Sermon preached before the House of Commons 1729, on the Martyrdom of King Charles, entitled "An Apology for Princes, or the Reverence due to Government."

But his old friends the Muses were not forgotten. In 1730 he sent into the world "Imperium Pelagi," a Naval

a Naval Lyric written in Imitation of Pindar's Spirit, occaſioned by his Majeſty's return from Hanover September 1729, and the ſucceeding Peace." Not long after this Pindaric attempt, he publiſhed two Epiſtles to Pope concerning the authors of the age, 1730. In July 1730 he was preſented by his college to the Rectory of Welwyn in Hertfordſhire. In April 1732 he married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Litchfield, and widow of Colonel Lee.

The next production of his Muſe was "The Sea-Piece," in two Odes. In 1734 he publiſhed "The Foreign Addreſs occaſioned by the Britiſh Fleet and the Poſture of Affairs, written in the Character of a Sailor." This production is inſerted in the four volumes he publiſhed himſelf; but many others he thought beneath him, and therefore omitted them.

Of his wife, who brought him one child, Frederick, he was deprived in 1740. She was ſoon followed by an amiable daughter, the child of her former huſband, who was juſt married to Mr. Temple, ſon of Lord Palmerſton. Mr. Temple did not long remain after his wife. To the ſorrow Young felt at theſe loſſes we are indebted for his "Night Thoughts," written after he was ſixty years of age.

Notwithſtanding the farewell which he ſeemed to have taken in theſe productions of every thing which bore the leaſt reſemblance to ambition, he dipped again in politicks. In 1745 he wrote "Reflections on the Publick Situation of the Kingdom, addreſſed to the Duke of Newcaſtle." In 1753, when "The Brothers" had lain by him above thirty years, it appeared upon the ſtage. He determined that the profits ſhould go to the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel; but the play failing, he made up the ſum he intended, which was a thouſand pounds, from his own pocket.

The next performance which he printed was a proſe publication entitled, "The Centaur not Fabulous; in

ſix Letters to a Friend on the Life in Vogue." After ſome trifling productions in 1762, a ſhort time before his death he publiſhed "Reſignation," and in April 1765, at an age to which few attain (84), a period was put to his life.

"Of Young's poems it is difficult to give any general character, for he has no uniformity of manner: one of his pieces has no great reſemblance to another. He began to write early, and continued long; and at different times had different modes of poetical excellence in view. His numbers are ſometimes ſmooth, and ſometimes rugged; his ſtile is ſometimes concatenated, and ſometimes abrupt; ſometimes diffuſive, and ſometimes conciſe.

——"He was not one of the writers whom experience improves, and who, obſerving their own faults, become gradually correct. His poem of the "Laſt Day," his firſt great performance, has an equability and propriety, which he afterwards either never endeavoured at or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean, yet the whole is languid."

——"His ſtory of "Jane Grey" was never popular. It is written with elegance enough, but *Jane* is too heroick to be pitied.

"The "Univerſal Paſſion" is indeed a very great performance. It is ſaid to be a ſeries of epigrams; but if it be, it is what the author intended: his endeavour was at the production of ſtriking diſtichs and pointed ſentences; and his diſtichs have the weight of ſolid ſentiment, and his points the ſharpneſs of reſiſtleſs truth. His characters are often ſelected with diſcernment, and drawn with nicety; his illuſtrations are often happy, and his reflections often juſt. His ſpecies of ſatire is between thoſe of Horace and of Juvenal; he has the gaiety of Horace without his laxity of numbers, and the morality of Juvenal with greater variation of images: he plays, indeed, only on the ſurface

ſurface of life; he never penetrates the receſſes of the mind, and therefore the whole power of his poetry is exhauſted by a ſingle peruſal; his conceits pleaſe only when they ſurpriſe."

——" In his " Night Thoughts" he has exhibited a very wide diſplay of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and ſtriking alluſions, a wilderneſs of thought, in which the fertility of fancy ſcatters flowers of every hue and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verſe could not be changed for rhyme, but with diſadvantage. The wild diffuſion of the ſentiments, and the digreſſive ſallies of imagination, would have been compreſſed and reſtrained by regard to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactneſs but copiouſneſs; particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole, and in the whole there is a magnificence like that aſcribed to a Chineſe plantation, the magnificence of vaſt extent, and endleſs diverſity."

" Of " Reſignation," Dr. Johnſon ſays, " there is Young in every ſtanza, ſuch as he often was in his higheſt vigour."

Of his Plays we have the following character: " In " Buſiris" there are the greateſt ebullitions of imagination; but the pride of Buſiris is ſuch as no other man can have, and the whole is too remote from known life, to raiſe either grief, terror, or indignation. The " Revenge" appears much nearer to human practices and manners, and therefore keeps poſſeſſion of the ſtage: the firſt deſign ſeems ſuggeſted by " Othello;" but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original. The moral obſervations are ſo introduced, and ſo expreſſed, as to have all the novelty that can be required. Of " The Brothers" I may be allowed to ſay nothing, ſince nothing was ever ſaid of it by the publick."

" It muſt be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy or relation."

" His verſification is his own; neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any reſemblance to thoſe of former writers."

" His verſes are formed by no certain model; for he is no more like himſelf in his different productions than he is like others. He ſeems never to have ſtudied proſody, nor to have any direction but from his own ear. But with all his defects, he was a man of genius and a poet."

DYER.

JOHN DYER was born in 1700, the ſecond ſon of Robert Dyer of Aberglaſney in Caermarthenſhire, a ſolicitor of great capacity and note. He paſſed through Weſtminſter School under the care of Dr. Freind, and was then called home to be inſtructed in his father's profeſſion. But his father died ſoon, and he took no delight in the ſtudy of the law. Having always amuſed himſelf with drawing, he reſolved to turn painter, and became pupil to Mr. Richardſon, an artiſt of high reputation, but now better known by his books than by his pictures.

Having ſtudied a while under his maſter, he became, as he ſays himſelf, an itinerant painter, and wandered about South Wales and the parts adjacent; but he mingled poetry with painting, and about 1727 printed " Grongar Hill" in Lewis's Miſcellany.

Being, probably, unſatisfied with his own proficiency, he, like other painters, travelled to Italy; and coming back in 1740 publiſhed the " Ruins of Rome."

Rome." His health declining, and being fond of ſtudy, he determined to go into the church. He therefore entered into orders, and, it ſeems, married about the ſame time a lady of the name of Enſor; by her in 1756, he had a ſon and three daughters living.

His eccleſiaſtical proviſion was for a long time but ſlender. His firſt patron, Mr. Harper, gave him, in 1741, Calthorp in Leiceſterſhire, of eighty pounds a year, on which he lived ten years, and then exchanged for Betchford in Lincolnſhire of ſeventy-five. In 1752 Sir John Heathcote gave him Coningſby, of one hundred and twenty pounds a year, and afterwards the Chancellor added Kirkby, of one hundred and ten.

About the time of his removal to Coningſby he publiſhed "The Fleece," his greateſt poetical work. He did not long ſurvive this publication, nor long enjoy the increaſe of his preferments, for in 1758 he died.

"As a poet, "Grongar Hill" is the happieſt of his productions: it is not indeed very accurately written; but the ſcenes which it diſplays are ſo pleaſing, the images which they raiſe ſo welcome to the mind, and the reflections of the writer ſo conſonant to the general ſenſe or experience of mankind, that when it is once read, it will be read again.

"The idea of the "Ruins of Rome" ſtrikes more, but pleaſes leſs, and the title raiſes greater expectation than the performance gratifies."

"Of the Fleece, which never became popular, and is now univerſally neglected, I can ſay little that is likely to recal it to attention. The woolcomber and the poet appear to me ſuch diſcordant natures, that an attempt to bring them together is to *couple the ſerpent with the fowl.* When Dyer, whoſe mind was not unpoetical, has done his utmoſt by intereſting his reader in our native commodity, by interſperſing ru-

ral imagery, and accidental digreſſions, by cloathing ſmall images in great words, and by all the writer's arts of deluſion, the meanneſs naturally adhering, and the irreverence habitually annexed to trade and manufacture, ſink him under inſuperable oppreſſion; and the diſguſt which blank verſe, encumbering and encumbered, ſuperadds to an unpleaſing ſubject, ſoon repels the reader, however willing to be pleaſed."

MALLET.

JOHNSON confeſſes that his account of this author has been gained from no other means, than the unauthoriſed loquacity of common fame, and a very ſlight perſonal knowledge.

His father's name was Malloch, by whoſe penury he was compelled to be *Janitor* of the High School at Edinburgh, a mean office, of which he did not afterwards delight to hear. But he ſurmounted the diſadvantages of his birth and fortune; for when the Duke of Montroſe applied to the College of Edinburgh for a tutor to educate his ſons, Malloch, as he was then called, was recommended.

When his pupils were ſent to ſee the world, they were intruſted to his care; and having conducted them round the common circle of modiſh travels, he returned with them to London, where, by the influence of the family in which he reſided, he naturally gained admiſſion to many perſons of the higheſt rank and the higheſt character, to wits, nobles, and ſtateſmen.

His firſt production was "William and Margaret." Not long afterwards he publiſhed the "Excurſion" (1728).—His poem on "Verbal Criticiſm" (1733) was

was written to pay court to Pope. His firſt tragedy was "Eurydice," acted at Drury-lane in 1731; but it had not much ſucceſs. He now changed his name from *Malloch* to *Mallet*.

When the Prince of Wales was driven from the Palace, he endeavoured to commence his popularity by the patronage of literature, and made Mallet his unſecretary, with a ſalary of two hundred pounds:—Thomſon likewiſe had a penſion, and they were aſſociated in the compoſition of the maſque of "Alfred," which in its original ſtate was played at *Cliefden* in 1740; it was afterwards almoſt wholly changed by Mallet, and brought upon the ſtage at Drury-lane in 1751, but with no great ſucceſs.

While he was in the Prince's ſervice he publiſhed "Muſtapha," dedicated to the Prince his maſter. It was acted at Drury-lane in 1739, and was well received.

After a long interval appeared "Amyntor and Theodora" (1747), a long ſtory in blank verſe. In 1753 his maſque of "Britannia" was acted at Drury-lane, and his tragedy of "Elvira" in 1763, in which year he was appointed keeper of the book of Entries for ſhips in the port of London.

Towards the end of his life he went with his wife to France; but after a while, finding his health declining, he returned alone to England, and died in April 1765.

He was twice married, and by his firſt wife had ſeveral children. His ſecond wife was the daughter of a nobleman's ſteward, who had a conſiderable fortune, which ſhe took care to retain in her own hands.

"As a writer (ſays Dr. Johnſon) he cannot be placed in any high claſs. There is no ſpecies of compoſition in which he was eminent. His dramas had their day, a ſhort day, and are forgotten. His blank verſe ſeems to my ear the echo of Thomſon.

SHENSTONE.

WILLIAM SHENSTONE, the ſon of Thomas Shenſtone and Anne Pen, was born in November 1714, at the Leaſowes in Hales-Owen, one of thoſe inſulated diſtricts, which in the diviſion of the kingdom was appended, for ſome reaſon not now diſcoverable, to a diſtant county, and which, though ſurrounded by Warwickſhire and Worceſterſhire, belongs to Shropſhire, though perhaps thirty miles diſtant from any part of it.

He learned to read of an old dame, whom his poem of the "Schoolmiſtreſs" has delivered to poſterity;—As he grew older, he went for a while to the grammar-ſchool in Hales-Owen, and was placed afterwards with Mr. Crumpton, an eminent ſchoolmaſter at Solihul, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf by the quickneſs of his progreſs. In June 1724 he was deprived of his father, and in 1726 of his grandfather, when he, together with his brother, who died afterwards unmarried, was left to the care of his grandmother, who managed the eſtate.

From ſchool he was ſent in 1732 to Pembroke College in Oxford.—Here he continued his name for ten years, though he took no degree. After the firſt four years he put on the civilian's gown, but without ſhewing any intention to engage in the profeſſion. About the time when he went to Oxford, the death of his grandmother devolved his affairs to the care of the Reverend Mr. Dolman, of Broome in Staffordſhire.

At Oxford he employed himſelf upon Engliſh poetry, and in 1737 publiſhed a ſmall miſcellany, without

out his name. He then wandered about to acquaint himſelf with life, and was ſometimes at London, ſometimes at Bath, or any other place of public reſort; but he did not forget his poetry. He publiſhed 1740 his "Judgment of Hercules," addreſſed to Mr. Lyttleton.---This was two years afterwards followed by the "Schoolmiſtreſs."

Mr. Dolman died in 1745, and the care of his own fortune now fell upon himſelf. At this period began his delight in rural pleaſures, and his ambition for rural elegance. In time his expences brought him into difficulties, for he ſpent his eſtate in adorning it, and probably his death was haſtened by his anxieties.

He died at the Leaſowes, of a putrid fever, February 11, 1763, and was buried by the ſide of his brother in the Church yard of Hales-Owen. He was never married.

"His poems conſiſt of elegies, odes, and ballads, humourous ſallies, and moral pieces.

"His conception of an elegy he has in his preface very judiciouſly and diſcriminately explained. It is, according to his account, the effuſion of a contemplative mind, ſometimes plaintive and always ſerious, and therefore ſuperior to the glitter of ſlight ornaments. His compoſitions ſuit not ill to this deſcription."

"—— The lines are ſometimes ſuch as elegy requires, ſmooth and eaſy; but to this praiſe his claim is not conſtant; his diction is often harſh, improper, and affected; his words ill-coined, or ill-choſen, and his phraſes unſkilfully inverted.

"The Lyrick poems are almoſt all of the light and airy kind, ſuch as trip lightly and nimbly along, without the load of any weighty meaning. From theſe, however, "Rural Elegance" has ſome right to be excepted."

——" Of the reſt I cannot think any excellent; the " Skylark" pleaſes me the beſt, which has however more of the epigram than of the ode.

" But the four parts of his " Paſtoral Ballad" demand particular notice. I cannot but regret that it is paſtoral. An intelligent reader, acquainted with the ſcenes of real life, ſickens at the mention of the *crook*, the *pipe*, the *ſheep*, and the *kids*, which it is not neceſſary to bring forward to notice, for the poet's art is ſelection, and he ought to ſhew the beauties without the groſſneſs of the country life. His ſtanzas ſeem to have been choſen in imitation of Rowe's " Deſpairing Shepherd."

" In the firſt part are two paſſages, to which if any mind denies ſympathy, it has no acquaintance with love or nature;"

Here Johnſon introduces the verſe beginning

> I priz'd every hour that went by,
> &c. &c.

and the two ſubſequent verſes.

" In the ſecond this paſſage has its prettineſs, though it be not equal to the former:"

> I have found out a gift for my fair,
> &c. &c.

with the remainder of the verſe.

" In the third he mentions the common places of amorous poetry with ſome addreſs:"

> Tis his with mock paſſion to glow;
> &c. &c.

to the end of the verſe.

" In the fourth I find nothing better than this natural ſtrain of hope:"

> Alas from the day that we met,

and ſo to the end of the verſe.

After

After ſpeaking of a few leſſer pieces, Dr. Johnſon concludes his criticiſms thus:

"The Schoolmiſtreſs," of which I know not what claim it has to ſtand among the moral works, is ſurely the moſt pleaſing of Shenſtone's performances. The adoption of a particular ſtile, in light and ſhort compoſitions, contributes much to the increaſe of pleaſure; we are entertained at once with two imitations, of nature in the ſentiments, of the original author in the ſtile, and between them the mind is kept in perfect employment.

"The general recommendation of Shenſtone is eaſineſs and ſimplicity; his general defect is want of comprehenſion and variety. Had his mind been better ſtored with knowledge, whether he could have been great I know not, he have could certainly been agreeable."

AKENSIDE.

MARK AKENSIDE was born the 9th of November 1721 at Newcaſtle upon Tyne. His father, Mark, was a butcher of the Preſbyterian ſect; his mother's name was Mary Lumſden. He received the firſt part of his education at the grammar-ſchool of Newcaſtle; and was afterwards inſtructed by Mr. Wilſon, who kept a private academy.

At the age of eighteen he was ſent to Edinburgh, that he might qualify himſelf for the office of a Diſſenting Miniſter; but this he ſoon laid aſide, and determined to ſtudy phyſick.

He was one of thoſe poets who have felt very early the motions of genius, and one of thoſe ſtudents who have very early ſtored their memories with ſentiments and

and images. Many of his performances were produced in his youth; and his greateſt work, "The Pleaſures of Imagination," appeared in 1744.

In 1741 he went to Leyden in purſuit of medical knowledge; and three years afterwards (May 16, 1744) became Doctor of Phyſick. Soon after his return from abroad (1745) he publiſhed his firſt collection of Odes, and was impelled by an outrageous zeal for patriotiſm to write a very acrimonious epiſtle to Pulteney, whom he ſtigmatizes, under the name of *Curio*, as the betrayer of his country.

He was now known as a poet, but was ſtill to make his way as a phyſician; and would perhaps have been reduced to great exigencies, but that Mr. Dyſon, with an ardour of friendſhip that has not many examples, allowed him 300l. a year. Thus ſupported, he advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice, or eminence of popularity.

He died June 23, 1770, in the forty-ninth year of his age.

"His great work is the "Pleaſures of Imagination;" a performance which, publiſhed as it was at the age of twenty-three, raiſed expectations which were not afterwards very amply ſatisfied. It has undoubtedly a juſt claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquiſitions, of a young mind ſtored with images, and much exerciſed in combining and comparing them."

——"The ſubject is well choſen, as it includes all images that can ſtrike or pleaſe, and thus compriſes every ſpecies of poetical delight. The only difficulty is in the choice of examples and illuſtrations; and it is not eaſy in ſuch exuberance of matter to find the middle point between penury and fatiety. The parts ſeem artificially diſpoſed, with ſufficient coherence, ſo as

as that they cannot change their places without injury to the general design.

"His images are displayed with such luxuriance of expression, that they are hidden, like Butler's moon, by a *veil of light*; they are forms fantastically lost under superfluity of dress. *Pars minima est ipsa puella sui.* The words are multiplied till the sense is hardly perceived; attention deserts the mind and settles in the ear. The reader wanders through the gay diffusion sometimes amazed, and sometimes delighted; but, after many turnings in the flowery labyrinth, comes out as he went in. He remarked little, and laid hold on nothing.

"To his versification justice requires that praise should not be denied. In the general fabrication of his lines he is perhaps superior to any other writer of blank verse."

"His diction is certainly so far poetical as it is not prosaick, and so far valuable as it is not common. He is to be commended as having fewer artifices of disgust than most of his brethren of the blank song."

Of his other poetry Dr. Johnson speaks slightingly.

LYTTLETON.

GEORGE LYTTLETON, the son of Sir Thomas Lyttleton, of Hagley in Worcestershire, was born in 1709. He was educated at Eton, where he was much distinguished among his school-fellows. From Eton he went to Christ Church, where he retained the same reputation of superiority, and displayed his abilities to the publick in a poem on "Blenheim." He was a very early writer both in verse and prose

His

His "Progreſs of Love" and his "Perſian Letters" were both written when he was very young.

He ſtaid not long at Oxford, for in 1728 he began his travels, and ſaw France and Italy. When he returned he obtained a ſeat in Parliament, and ſoon diſtinguiſhed himſelf among the moſt eager opponents of Sir Robert Walpole. For many years the name of George Lyttleton was ſeen as an oppoſitioniſt in every account of every debate in the Houſe of Commons.

The Prince of Wales, being (1737) driven from the the court, opened his arms to the opponents of the miniſtry. Mr. Lyttleton was made his ſecretary, Mallet his under-ſecretary, and Thomſon had a penſion.

While Lyttleton thus ſtood conſpicuous in the firſt rank of oppoſition, he married (1741) Miſs Lucy Forteſcue of Devonſhire, by whom he had a ſon, the late Lord Lyttleton, and two daughters. He was unfortunately deprived of her in about five years afterwards, and he ſolaced his grief by writing a long poem to her memory.

He did not however condemn himſelf to perpetual ſolitude and ſorrow; for after a while he was content to ſeek happineſs again by a ſecond marriage with the daughter of Sir Robert Rich; but the experiment was unſucceſsful.

At length, after a long ſtruggle, Walpole gave way, and honour and profit were diſtributed among his conquerors. Lyttleton was made (1744) one of the Lords of the Treaſury, and from that time was engaged in ſupporting the ſchemes of the miniſtry.

In 1751 his father died, when he inherited a baronet's title with a large eſtate. He ſtill continued his exertions in Parliament, and was made (1754) Cofferer and Privy Counſellor: this place he exchanged next year for the great office of Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The

The ſubſequent year his curioſity led him into Wales, and ſoon after he publiſhed his "Dialogues of the Dead."

When, in the latter part of the laſt reign, the inauſpicious commencement of the war made the diſſolution of the miniſtry unavoidable, Sir George Lyttleton, loſing his employment with the reſt, was recompenſed with a peerage.

His laſt literary production was his "Hiſtory of Henry the Second," elaborated by the reſearches and deliberations of twenty years. After living to ſee this work moſt favourably received by the publick, he was ſeized with his laſt illneſs, and died the twenty-ſecond of Auguſt 1773, aged 64 years.

"Lord Lyttleton's poems are the works of a man of literature and judgment devoting part of his time to verſification. They have nothing to be deſpiſed, and little to be admired. Of his "Progreſs of Love," it is ſufficient blame to ſay that it is paſtoral. His blank verſe in "Blenheim" has neither much force nor much elegance. His little performances, whether ſongs or epigrams, are ſometimes ſprightly, and ſometimes inſipid. His epiſtolary pieces have a ſmooth equability, which cannot much tire, becauſe they are ſhort, but which ſeldom *elevates* or *ſurpriſes*. But from this cenſure ought to be excepted his "Advice to Belinda," which, though for the moſt part written when he was very young, contains much truth and much prudence, very elegantly and vigorouſly expreſſed, and ſhews a mind attentive to life, and a power of poetry which cultivation might have raiſed to excellence."

WEST.

WEST.

GILBERT WEST was the ſon of the Reverend Dr. Weſt. His mother was ſiſter to Sir Richard Temple, afterwards Lord Cobham. His father, purpoſing to educate him for the church, ſent him firſt to Eton and afterwards to Oxford; but he was ſeduced to a more airy mode of life, by a commiſſion in a troop of horſe.

After continuing ſome time in the army, he became more inclined to civil employment. He therefore laid down his commiſſion and engaged in buſineſs under the Lord Townſend, then Secretary of State, with whom he attended the King to Hanover. His adherence to Lord Townſend ended in nothing but a nomination (May 1729) to be clerk-extraordinary of the Privy Council, which produced no immediate profit; for it only placed him in a ſtate of expectation and right of ſucceſſion, and it was very long before a vacancy admitted him to profit.

Soon afterwards he married, and ſettled himſelf in a very pleaſant houſe at Wickham in Kent, where he devoted himſelf to learning and to piety.---In 1747 he publiſhed his "Obſervations on the Reſurrection," for which the Univerſity of Oxford created him a Doctor of Laws by diploma March the 30th 1748.---He alſo publiſhed a verſion of Pindar.

Mr. Weſt's income was not large; but in time his revenue was improved; he lived to have one of the lucrative clerkſhips of the Privy Council (1752), and Mr. Pitt at laſt had it in his power to make him Treaſurer of Chelſea Hoſpital.

He

He was now ſufficiently rich; but wealth came too late to be long enjoyed: nor could it ſecure him from the calamities of life; he loſt (1755) his only ſon, and the year after (March 26) a ſtroke of the palſy brought him to the grave.

"Of his tranſlations," ſays Dr. Johnſon, "I have only compared the firſt Olympick Ode with the original, and found my expectation ſurpaſſed both by its elegance and its exactneſs.

"A work of this kind muſt, in a minute examination, diſcover many imperfections; but Weſt's verſion, ſo far as I have conſidered it, appears to be the product of great labour and great abilities.

"His "Inſtitution of the Garter" (1742) is written with ſufficient knowledge of the manners that prevailed in the age to which it is referred, and with great elegance of diction; but for want of a proceſs of events, neither knowledge nor elegance preſerved the reader from wearineſs.

"His "Imitations of Spenſer" are very ſucceſsfully performed, with reſpect to the metre, the language and the fiction."

GRAY.

THOMAS GRAY, the ſon of Mr. Philip Gray, a ſcrivener of London, was born in Cornhill 1716. His grammar education he received at Eton and when he left ſchool, in 1734, entered a penſioner at Peterhouſe in Cambridge.

After he had remained there about five years, where he took no degree (as he intended to follow the common law), Mr. Horace Walpole invited him to travel with him as his companion. They wandered through

through France into Italy, but at Florence they quarrelled and parted. Gray returned to England in September 1741, and in about two months afterwards buried his father, who, had by an injudicious waſte of money upon a new houſe, ſo much leſſened his fortune, that Gray thought himſelf too poor to ſtudy the law. He therefore retired to Cambridge, where he ſoon after became Bachelor of Civil Law, and where he paſſed, except a ſhort reſidence at London, the reſt of his life.

"Being adviſed not to finiſh a tragedy which he began, of the name of "Agrippina," he produced in 1742 the "Ode to Spring," his "Proſpect of Eton," and his "Ode to Adverſity." He began likewiſe a Latin poem "De Principiis Cogitandi."

In his retirement at Peterhouſe he wrote (1747) an ode on the "Death of Mr. Walpole's Cat," and the year afterwards attempted a poem of more importance on "Government and Education," of which the fragments that remain have many excellent lines.

His next production (1750) was his far-famed "Elegy in the Church-yard," which, finding its way into a magazine, firſt made him known to the publick. An invitation from Lady Cobham about this time gave occaſion to his "Long Story." In the year 1753 he loſt his mother.

The "Progreſs of Poetry" and "The Bard" were publiſhed in 1757, and Gray's reputation was now ſo high, that, after the death of Cibber, he had the honor of refuſing the laurel, which was then beſtowed on Mr. Whitehead.

When the Profeſſor of Modern Languages at Cambridge died, he was, as he ſays, *cockered and ſpirited up* till he aſked it of Lord Bute, who ſent him a civil refuſal.

In 1765, believing that his health was promoted by exerciſe and change of place, he undertook a journey into

into Scotland, of which his account, ſo far as it extends, is very curious and elegant. He there naturally contracted a friendſhip with Dr. Beattie.

What he had formerly ſolicited in vain was at laſt given him without ſolicitation. The Profeſſorſhip of Languages became again vacant, and he received 1768 an offer of it from the Duke of Grafton. He accepted, and retained it to his death.

Ill health made another journey neceſſary, and he viſited (1769) Weſtmoreland and Cumberland. He that reads his epiſtolary narration wiſhes that to travel and to tell his travels had been more of his employment.

His travels and his ſtudies were now near their end. The gout, of which he had ſuſtained many weak attacks, fell upon his ſtomach, and, yielding to no medicines, produced ſtrong convulſions, which (July 30, 1771) terminated in death.

Of his poetry Dr. Johnſon's opinion is not very favourable. "His "Ode on Spring," ſays he, "has ſomething poetical both in the language and the thoughts; but the language is too luxuriant, and the thoughts have nothing new."

"The Poem on the "Cat" was doubtleſs by its author conſidered as a trifle, but it is not a happy trifle. In the firſt ſtanza *the azure flowers that blow*, ſhew that a rhyme is ſometimes made when it cannot eaſily be found. *Selima* the *Cat* is called a nymph, with ſome violence both to language and ſenſe; but there is good uſe made of it when it is done, for of the two lines,

"What female heart can gold deſpiſe?
"What cat's averſe to fiſh?

the firſt relates merely to the nymph, and the ſecond only to the cat. The ſixth ſtanza contains a melancholy truth, that *a favourite has no friend*; but the laſt ends in a pointed ſentence of no relation to the purpoſe;

poſe; if what *gliſtened* had been *gold*, the cat would not have gone into the water, and if ſhe had would not leſs have been drowned.

"The "Proſpect of Eton College" ſuggeſts nothing to Gray which every beholder does not equally think and feel. His ſupplication to father *Thames* to tell him who drives the hoop, or toſſes the ball, is uſeleſs and puerile. Father *Thames* has no better means of knowing than himſelf. His epithet of "buxom health" is not elegant; he ſeems not to underſtand the word. Gray thought his language more poetical as it was more remote from common uſe; finding in Dryden *honey redolent of ſpring*, an expreſſion that reaches the utmoſt limits of our language, Gray drove it a little more beyond comprehenſion, by making *gales* to be *redolent of joy and youth*."

——"Of the "Ode on Adverſity," at once poetical and rational, I will not by ſlight objections violate the dignity."

Dr. Johnſon next enters into a particular examination of the "Progreſs of Poetry," and "The Bard," both which he, for the moſt part, ſeverely cenſures. His criticiſm on Gray concludes with the following paragraphs:

"Theſe Odes are marked by glittering accumulations of ungraceful ornaments; they ſtrike rather than pleaſe; the images are magnified by affectation; the language is laboured into harſhneſs. The mind of the writer ſeems to work with unnatural violence. *Double double toil and trouble.* He has a kind of ſtrutting dignity, and is tall by walking on tip-toe. His art and his ſtruggle are too viſible, and there is too little appearance of eaſe or nature.

"To ſay that he has no beauties would be unjuſt: a man like him, of great learning and great induſtry, could not but produce ſomething valuable. When he

pleaſes

pleaſes leaſt, it can only be ſaid that a good deſign was ill directed.

" His tranſlations of Northern and Welſh poetry deſerve praiſe; the imagery is preſerved, perhaps often improved; but the language is unlike the language of other poets.

" In the character of his " Elegy," I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for by the common ſenſe of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinements of ſubtilty and the dogmatiſm of learning, muſt be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The " Church Yard" abounds with images which find a mirrour in every mind, and with ſentiments to which every boſom returns an echo. The four ſtanzas beginning, *Yet even theſe bones*, are to me original: I have never ſeen the notions in any other place; yet he that reads them here perſuades himſelf that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame and uſeleſs to praiſe him."

THE END.